

NEXUS

FALL 2023



Department of
**Anesthesiology &
Perioperative Medicine**



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Senthil Sadhasivam, MD, MPH, MBA, FASA, conducts groundbreaking research on opioid pharmacogenetics, surgical pain management, improving perioperative outcomes, and opioid use disorder and strives to rapidly translate his research findings into clinical practice.

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To celebrate women in our department, in this edition of *Nexus* we spotlight the careers of **Patricia Dalby, MD**; **Marsha Ritter Jones, MD, PhD**; and **Erica Wiesen, MSN, CRNA**.

Chair's Message



**Aman Mahajan,
MD, PhD, MBA**

Dear Alumni, Friends, and Department Members,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the sixth edition of our department's e-magazine, *Nexus*. This Fall 2023 issue encapsulates the dynamic activities and noteworthy developments that have transpired since the Spring of this year.

In our Research Spotlight, we shine a light on the groundbreaking work of Dr. Senthil Sadhasivam. His research spans the realms of opioid pharmacogenetics, surgical pain management, perioperative outcome optimization, opioid use disorder, and technology development. We also celebrate the careers of three remarkable women in our department — our Obstetric Anesthesiology Fellowship Director Dr. Patricia Dalby, researcher and VA Pittsburgh Healthcare physician Dr. Marsha Ritter Jones, and UPMC Presbyterian CRNA Erica Wiesen. This issue also features insightful Q&A profiles from UPMC Anesthesiology Residency Associate Program Director Dr. Elizabeth Ungerman, UPMC Shadyside CRNA Kristen Shubert, and Rafelin O'Dell from UPMC Passavant.

I am thrilled to share some important updates on our communication initiatives. Our Communications Team has been working diligently to refresh our social media presence and has established departmental channels on LinkedIn, Instagram, and Threads, broadening our reach beyond

Facebook, X/Twitter, and YouTube. In the coming year, we will be launching a new department website. Finally, this issue of *Nexus* marks its final edition in PDF format. Starting with the next issue early next year, *Nexus* will transition into an email newsletter, ensuring more frequent updates delivered directly to your inbox.

A heartfelt "thank you" to all our contributors who have made this edition of *Nexus* possible. For those interested in submitting content for potential publication in future issues, please reach out to anescomm@pitt.edu.

In closing, I extend my gratitude for your continued support and readership. Wishing each and every one of you a joyous holiday season.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'A' and 'M' in a stylized, cursive font.

Research Spotlight: Dr. Senthil Sadhasivam



Senthil Sadhasivam, MD, MPH, MBA, FASA, conducts groundbreaking research on opioid pharmacogenetics, surgical pain management, improving perioperative outcomes, and opioid use disorder and strives to rapidly translate his research findings into clinical practice.

Dr. Senthil Sadhasivam's journey towards a career in anesthesiology began early. There were no physicians in the small village in India where he grew up, so his mother challenged him to become the first. After completing his medical school training and anesthesiology residency at the premier All India Institute of Medical Science in India, he began visiting the US to attend annual meetings of the American Society of Anesthesiologists where he was invited to present his research. Dr. Sadhasivam was impressed by the US healthcare system's support and resources for anesthesiology researchers. He pursued a second anesthesiology residency at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center / Harvard Medical School and a pediatric anesthesiology fellowship at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. He began a career of great accomplishments at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, where he led the largest pediatric pain service in the country. His leadership continued at the Indiana University (IU) School of Medicine as Chief Anesthesiologist at Riley Hospital for Children and Vice Chair of Research in the Department of Anesthesiology.

Dr. Sadhasivam joined our department in 2021, inspired by the work of other great leaders such as Dr. Anantha Shekhar, currently John and Gertrude Petersen Dean of Medicine and Senior Vice Chancellor of the Health Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh and previously Executive Associate Dean for Research Affairs at IU, and our Chair Dr. Aman Mahajan, who has a very strong track record of NIH funding and leads by example by promoting research and faculty in many ways. Dr. Sadhasivam was also looking for better opportunities to translate his research into clinical practice, "and there's no better place than UPMC for research translation," he says.

Dr. Sadhasivam's influence on our clinical and research missions since coming to Pittsburgh two years ago is already palpable. He is currently Executive Vice Chair for Clinical Quality, Patient Safety, and Clinical Research in our department and Director of Perioperative Research and Director of the Perioperative Genomics Program for the University of Pittsburgh. He oversees clinical strategy and operations for our entire department and our in-house Industry-Sponsored Clinical Research Program and coaches and mentors other department faculty members to develop and secure funding for their own cutting-edge scientific projects. His work has helped increase our department's grant submissions to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) from \$20 million to \$120 million in potential funding annually. This tremendous growth was reflected in our latest ranking as one of the top-five anesthesiology departments in the nation in NIH funding.

Dr. Sadhasivam's own research focuses on opioid pharmacogenetics, surgical pain management, improving perioperative outcomes, opioid use disorder (OUD) during pregnancy, technology development, and human wellbeing and spirituality. He currently has nine major NIH grants, including a U01 and several R01s either as primary principal investigator (PI), co-PI, or site PI. Dr. Sadhasivam strives to obtain larger multicenter U01 grants; he also mentors other faculty members in our department for their R01s and other NIH grants to further advance our NIH ranking and continue to strengthen our reputation as a regional and national research hub in the coming years. He has also enhanced our research infrastructure to provide stronger support for our faculty and fosters increased research collaboration with surgeons.

A major goal for Dr. Sadhasivam is translating research findings into clinical practice. This process can be slow, so he has engaged tech industry partners to help accelerate the translation. Dr. Sadhasivam is the founder and Chief Medical Officer of OpalGenix, a company created to translate the results of his opioid pharmacogenetics

research. Neuroptics, another industry partner, licensed Dr. Sadhasivam's intellectual property on predicting risks of postoperative opioid-induced respiratory depression using a handheld quantitative pupillometer. OpalGenix and Neuroptics are currently conducting five NIH SBIR/STTR-funded clinical studies at UPMC/Pitt and are constantly pursuing more funding to conduct additional validation studies to rapidly bring Dr. Sadhasivam's discoveries to the clinic. He is an inventor on over 15 US and European patent applications. "The research I did 20 years ago is only being practiced now. I don't want my current and ongoing research to take that long to impact patient care," he explains.

His opioid pharmacogenetics work uses data on the underlying genetic predisposition of surgery patients - neonates, children, adults, and nursing mothers - as well the type of surgery and other factors, to build algorithms to reliably predict which patients will have severe pain, serious adverse effects, or opioid addiction after surgery. The algorithms help surgeons and pain teams reduce opioid use and change opioid prescription patterns to improve outcomes. In the last two years, OpalGenix was awarded four NIH Small Business Innovation Research grants in partnership with the University of Pittsburgh to validate these algorithms to predict and prevent opiate-related complications in patients.

Dr. Sadhasivam's new project with Dr. Mahajan will focus on patients 65 years old and older undergoing major high risk cardiac and vascular surgery. Elderly Americans are at risk for significant cognitive decline. They can suffer from delirium, dementia, and depression, which negatively impact their overall quality of life. Our Center for Perioperative Care (CPC) coordinates patients' preoperative rehabilitation and optimizes their physical and mental health as much as possible before surgery. This new research will go a step beyond what we currently do at the CPC by adding cognitive and physical training and mental health treatment before surgery. The investigators will compare outcomes between one group who will receive these additional interventions and another group who will receive the current standard of care. They hypothesize that these patients will have significantly better cognitive and behavioral outcomes and reduced mortality within the 30 days after surgery, as well as reduced risk of stroke and heart attack.

"In our paper recently published in *JAMA Network Open*, we identified 3,000 variables like age, sex, race, surgery type, and sleep apnea history that can predict who is at risk for mortality and morbidity within the first 30 days after surgery. These variables are already in the patient's electronic health record and do not need to be collected manually. We have already implemented the risk algorithm in our electronic health record at UPMC," says Dr. Sadhasivam. "All surgeons are using it to identify high risk patients and are sending those patients to the CPC." The CPC's work will improve these patients' clinical and behavioral outcomes and reduce their length of hospital stay, resulting in lower mortality, morbidity, and medical expenditures. This research led to a recent multiple PI grant with Dr. Mahajan from the NIH/National Institute of Aging to proactively conduct preoperative and intraoperative interventions to reduce postoperative cognitive dysfunction, mortality, and major morbidities in elderly cardiac and vascular surgical patients. Enrollment for this pioneering perioperative brain health research will begin in early 2024 in collaboration with several faculty members in our department. Under Dr. Sadhasivam's leadership, we are working to take this research a step further by integrating genetics to better understand these patients. Currently, preoperative genotyping is not standard of care due to lack of robust evidence to convince payors to cover genotyping and risk algorithms. Genetics play a major role in many perioperative outcomes, including opioid-related adverse outcomes, severe pain, chronic surgical pain, thrombosis, accelerated Alzheimer's dementia, cardiac arrhythmias, and iatrogenic postoperative prescription opioid addiction. "Finding those at risk and personalizing their care would lead to the most cost-effective treatments and best outcomes," Dr. Sadhasivam says.

Another exciting line of Dr. Sadhasivam's research focuses on OUD in pregnant women in collaboration with UPMC Addiction Medicine specialists Drs. Elizabeth Krans and Ilana Hull. Shockingly, many pregnant women abuse opioids, which also negatively affects their children. One newborn who is addicted to opioids is born in the US every 10 minutes. Both the fetuses and future children of women who abuse opioids have a high risk of neonatal opioid withdrawal syndrome (NOWS) and future OUD as adolescents and young adults. "We have a big opportunity to change the lives of pregnant women with OUD by proactively reducing their risk of maternal relapse, increasing compliance, and minimizing the risk of neonates born addicted to opioids," says Dr. Sadhasivam. His study identifies those at risk for maternal opioid relapse and NOWS so we can tailor their therapies to improve outcomes. The investigators were recently awarded an R01 grant in partnership with IU to study the brains of pregnant women with OUD and their babies and identify both genetic risk factors and risk factors identified using imaging.

Dr. Sadhasivam's journey from a remote village in India to becoming a prominent NIH-funded anesthesiologist and influential leader exemplifies his dedication to both advancing medical research and patient care. His commitment to mentoring fellow researchers, translating research findings into clinical practice, and securing research funding have helped to propel our department to new heights. His work in opioid pharmacogenetics and surgical pain management and his innovative approach to improving perioperative outcomes and addressing OUD during pregnancy are helping to transform the field of anesthesiology. As we continue to embrace cutting-edge research and personalized precision care, the guidance of Dr. Sadhasivam and our other distinguished department leaders promises an exciting future for anesthesiology and perioperative medicine, one marked by better patient outcomes and a commitment to reducing suffering.

Celebrating Women in the Department

In this edition of *Nexus* we spotlight three accomplished female clinicians who shared their stories and unique perspectives.

Dr. Patricia Dalby

Patricia Dalby, MD, is an Associate Professor in our department, a physician at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, and Program Director of our Obstetric Anesthesiology Fellowship. She attended the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine and completed her residency at Allegheny General Hospital.

Can you share a pivotal moment in your career when you felt the impact of being a woman in anesthesiology, and how did you overcome any challenges that arose?

During my residency years, I saw that far fewer women went into the specialty of anesthesiology. As a minority, I kept doing my job as well as I could despite this overwhelmingly homogenous environment. Things have improved over the years, however, and many more young female physicians are now in anesthesiology. But that doesn't mean there isn't still a way to go.

Anesthesiology requires quick decision-making and teamwork. How have your unique perspectives and experiences as a woman contributed to enhancing patient care and collaboration within your medical team?

My area of specialization is obstetric anesthesiology, and I work at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, so I can empathize as a woman with our primarily female population. This is a big advantage in being able to effectively serve the patients. In general, diversity and inclusion in medicine are critical to providing culturally competent care.

As a role model for aspiring female physicians, what advice do you have for young women who are interested in pursuing careers in anesthesiology, particularly in the context of today's evolving healthcare landscape?

Follow your passions. That is the best piece of advice anyone can receive. Whatever the odds, you must do what your heart and mind feel passionately about. Time is not unlimited, so it is important to use it wisely to develop your strengths and find fulfillment in the work you do.

How does our department provide support and opportunities for women, especially in the context of career growth, education, and development?

I feel that our department has always supported women in anesthesiology, helping them to develop their careers and allowing personal time according to individual circumstances. Our department has a robust framework that allows for everyone to grow. Whether you want to provide clinical care, help educate the next generation of anesthesiologists, do cutting-edge research, or pursue advanced education and training, we have all those opportunities available.



Patricia Dalby, MD

Celebrating Women in the Department

Dr. Marsha Ritter Jones

Marsha Ritter Jones, MD, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in our department, a physician at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System, and a research scientist. She attended Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine and completed her residency at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a fellowship in regional anesthesiology at UPMC.

Your research has contributed to advancements in anesthesiology and medicine. Could you elaborate on a specific breakthrough or finding that you're particularly proud of, and how it has the potential to impact patient outcomes?

My current research looks at the role of sensory neurons in the recruitment of immune cells and in the facilitation of wound healing. We have discovered that a subset of these neurons plays a role in the latter stages of wound healing. We could potentially impact patient outcomes by using these findings to develop strategies to promote healthy neurons and in turn improve healing. Also, nerve blocks are used to manage pain. Understanding how the nerve immune interaction is coordinated may help us expand the use of nerve blocks and perineural medication application to promote appropriate wound healing.

Gender disparities can exist in various fields, including research. How can we encourage more women to take on leadership roles in research and ensure their voices are well-represented in shaping the field's future?

I believe women need to be placed in leadership roles and supported in those roles. To help prepare them, they should be encouraged to participate in leadership seminars and programs and be assigned to positions to develop leadership skills. Since women are still the primary caregivers to children and elderly parents, there needs to be support for them so that work-life balance is achieved. Continue to encourage women to serve, no matter their age, because as Oprah says, (paraphrasing) "You can have it all (family, career, self-care), but maybe not all at the same time."

Collaboration between clinicians and researchers is vital. How do you envision bridging the gap between bench research and clinical practice in the realm of anesthesiology, and what role do you see women playing in this endeavor?

One of the reasons I became a clinician scientist is to better bridge the gap between bench work and clinical practice. I will likely include my colleagues to help design and execute clinical studies that are based on my laboratory research. Women will be involved because it is important to look at how women respond to interventions, as their responses may be different from men's responses.

How does our department provide support and opportunities for women, especially in the context of career growth, education, and development?

The department supports women and others by helping physicians secure time and providing funds for them to complete activities that will help their career growth. In my case, it was time and funds to conduct basic science research.



Marsha Ritter Jones, MD, PhD

Celebrating Women in the Department

Erica Wiesen, MSN, CRNA

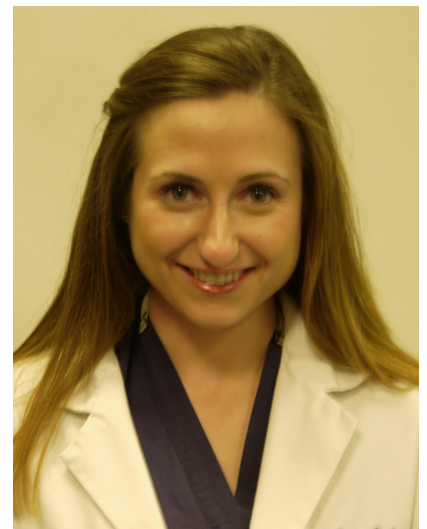
Erica Wiesen, MSN, CRNA, is a nurse anesthetist at UPMC Presbyterian and the SRNA Clinical Coordinator for UPMC Presbyterian/UPMC Montefiore. She earned her BSN at Duquesne University and completed her MSN/CRNA training with the University of Pittsburgh Nurse Anesthesia Program.

Could you share a little bit about yourself, your background, and how you came to our department and UPMC?

As a young child, I was captivated by watching surgeries on the Discovery Channel. This ignited a passion in me that led to a series of childhood professional aspirations. Could I be a surgeon, a pediatrician, or a veterinarian? These dreams danced in my head for years to come. However, nothing felt like a perfect fit until I suffered from acute appendicitis as a teenager. It was homecoming week, and I needed an emergency appendectomy at Children's Hospital. In pre-op, I met my Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA). She embodied kindness and compassion and made me feel comfortable before going under the knife. She told me she had the best job in health care. I instantly realized that I wanted to have the same connection with and impact on patients.

During my recovery, I did extensive research. What is a CRNA? How do I become one? I shadowed several CRNAs while I was still in high school, and this solidified my dream. My determination exploded, and I began my training and educational path towards becoming a CRNA. I studied nursing at Duquesne University and graduated in 2009. I started my professional career as a registered nurse in the Cleveland Clinic cardiothoracic ICU (intensive care unit). After a year, I was drawn back to the cardiac ICU at UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh because I enjoyed caring for pediatric patients.

After working for two years in intensive care settings, I was accepted by the University of Pittsburgh's Nurse Anesthesia Program. UPMC Presbyterian was my first clinical rotation as a student registered nurse anesthetist (SRNA). To say I was nervous would be an understatement. My first exposure to the anesthesia world was at UPMC Presbyterian's Level 1 Trauma Transplant Center. It was exciting, overwhelming, and inspiring all at the same time. The CRNAs were outstanding and quickly became my role models. UPMC Presbyterian's Anesthesiology Department has a family-style feel among those caring for critically ill and complex cases. I was in awe of their clinical skillset, knowledge, expertise, teamwork, and camaraderie. I remember various CRNAs telling me that I would be a good fit for Presby. Those comments stuck with me as I rotated through all my clinical sites.



Erica Wiesen, MSN, CRNA

During my training, I traveled to California for the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) conference and sat next to a woman on my flight. She was friendly, kind, enthusiastic, and engaging. She shared her favorite restaurants, places to see, and wine to drink. We both shared that we were attending the AANA conference. I told her I was a SRNA and she introduced herself as Helen Defranco, CRNA Clinical Director at UPMC Presbyterian. I was astonished. The stars were aligning, and my future wasn't just California. I graduated from Pitt's Nurse Anesthesia Program in 2014 and started my clinical journey as a CRNA at UPMC Presbyterian, which has been my home ever since.

CRNAs are essential members of anesthesia care teams. Could you describe an instance where your unique perspective as a woman CRNA led to a positive outcome or a particularly meaningful patient interaction?

In March of 2019, UPMC Presbyterian started accepting complex obstetric (OB) trauma patients due to the closing of UPMC Mercy's OB trauma service. This major transition necessitated re-education and action plans to prepare for OB trauma patients. Preparedness to perform a crash cesarean section in the trauma bay or the operating room was paramount. This transition sparked a desire to help, especially because I was seven months pregnant with experience in trauma and prior OB anesthesia experience at UPMC Magee Womens Hospital in the tier program. I was highly motivated to help our pregnant patients because this demographic presents significant risks when suffering from severe trauma.

At UPMC, we have created action plans that heavily involve communication between trauma services, anesthesiology, and maternal fetal medicine at UPMC Magee. However, there is still substantial room for improvement. This paved the way for a quality improvement project that was supported by UPMC Presbyterian Anesthesiology and UPMC/Pitt Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine leadership. We are collaborating with WISER and implementing an OB trauma in situ simulation once a month during our Wednesday morning business meeting. The project involves focusing on an OB trauma patient at 33-weeks' gestation after a motor vehicle collision. We are assessing pre/post simulation knowledge and confidence, skills during simulation (i.e., fetal monitoring, left uterine displacement, rapid sequence induction, smaller endotracheal tube, OB medication, crash c-section cart, neonatal/pediatric cart, etc.), and team performance (i.e., communication and mutual support). I hope that this will improve patient and clinical team safety to reduce the knowledge gap and provide safe anesthesia care for the OB trauma patient.

The healthcare industry is evolving rapidly. How do you perceive the role of CRNAs, especially women CRNAs, in adapting to and driving positive changes in anesthesia care delivery?

I witness CRNAs making a positive difference every day in the clinical setting. More specifically, I believe women CRNAs have a fierce drive to create positive change in anesthesia care delivery. I work with inspiring women who have excellent clinical skills and provide exceptional and quality care. Women have an amazing and unrelenting passion that is unstoppable.

As someone who provides anesthesia care, what message do you have for aspiring female nurses who are considering specializing in anesthesia, and what kind of impact can they aspire to make in this field?

I encourage all female nurses who are considering specializing in anesthesia to go for it! From my experience, it's very rewarding to care for patients during the most vulnerable time in their life. It gives me joy to build a level of trust with my patients and their families. The impact in this field is endless if you dare to dream and execute.

How does our department provide support and opportunities for women, especially in the context of career growth, education, and development?

Whether it's a quality improvement project, membership on a committee, or service in educational leadership roles like SRNA Clinical Coordinator, Assistant Director, or Senior Director, women have a strong presence as clinicians, educators, and administrators. Female CRNAs are creating a bright future for our patients and are trailblazers in our field.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

It has been a pleasure and an honor working with the most talented and caring CRNAs at UPMC Presbyterian. I am proud to be a part of the Presby family and look forward to all the wonderful things in our future.

Faculty Profile: Dr. Elizabeth Ungerman

Hometown: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Anesthesiologist in our department since 2015
as a resident and **since 2018** as an attending

Before becoming an anesthesiologist, what was the most unusual or interesting job you've ever had?

I worked as a lifeguard for six summers growing up, which was a fun job, but working to create a detection device for biological pathogens was definitely more interesting. I was working in a lab, and we were trying to create a device for public transportation/venues that would detect a small amount of pathogen traces. I worked specifically with anthrax and dengue.

What inspired you to become an anesthesiologist?

I thought it would be so fun to be a doctor that was really a ninja in disguise.

What attracted you to graduate medical education in particular?

Education, experience, and mentorship is the foundation to any successful clinical career. My mom was a teacher and always took immense joy in playing a role in the future of her students. I find it a privilege to be given the opportunity to make an impact on the lives and careers of future anesthesiologists.

Please tell us a bit about your first clinical experience after completing your training.

I have worked at Presbyterian and Shadyside since I finished my adult cardiothoracic anesthesiology fellowship. My first case as an attending was at Shadyside taking care of a patient with unstable cardiac tamponade. That certainly was a way to rip off the Band-Aid!

Who have been your most significant mentors?

Mentorship is a multifaceted word and there have been so many individuals who have had an impact on my personal and professional life. This article would be about five pages long if I listed every individual. Our department is full of fantastic mentors, and I am extraordinarily lucky to have so many.

What has been the biggest reward in your career?

Watching new trainees go off into practice knowing that I played a part in them successfully completing their training. Of course, it is also rewarding to have a role in giving patients a second chance at life.

What has been the biggest challenge in your career?

Of course, it is always difficult to manage different personalities and different competing interests. I wish there was a way to create a perfect amalgamation of education, clinical needs, and wellness.



Elizabeth Ungerman, MD, MS
Assistant Professor

Residency Site Academic
Director, UPMC Presbyterian
Associate Program Director,
Anesthesiology Residency
Program



L to R: Dr. Ungerman with her husband, Joe;
Dr. Ungerman's son Nolan; Joe and the family's
three massive hounds, Lillian, Alfonso, and Finn.

What advice do you have for aspiring anesthesiologists?

I have the coolest job in the world, there is no other job that I would want to do. I would tell them that hard work will pay off and that you need to show up and be present every day to best prepare you for your future. You only have so much time to train.

What has been your proudest non-work accomplishment?

I have an indestructible relationship with my family. I successfully resuscitated someone who collapsed at the gym when I was in college. My husband (who is awesome) and I are dog parents to three dogs (all insane and >100 lb.) and human parents to our four-month old.

Staff Profile: Rafelin O'Dell

Hometown: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

November 2023 will mark the end of her third year working with our department at UPMC Passavant in her current role



Rafelin O'Dell
Administrative Coordinator
UPMC Passavant
Anesthesiology

Tell us briefly about your job/role in the department.

I am the Administrative Coordinator for the Anesthesiology Department at UPMC Passavant Hospital. I support our department of 65, which comprises anesthesiologists, CRNAs, and anesthesia techs.

Please tell us a story about something funny that happened at work while you've been in our department.

I dressed up as a nun for Halloween and several visitors thought I was part of the clergy here at Passavant. I must have made a convincing nun.

What has been your proudest personal non-work accomplishment?

Becoming a mother to my daughter, Carissa.

Who have been your most significant mentors throughout your career and/or life?

My mother and father.

What might the department be surprised to know about you?

I am first generation Italian, and my family owned an Italian (of course) restaurant for many years.



Rafelin dressed (very convincingly) as a nun for Halloween.



Rafelin and her daughter Carissa, who also works at UPMC Passavant as a Hospitality Associate.

CRNA Profile: Kristen Shubert

Hometown: Pittsburgh, PA

CRNA for almost 15 years, all with our department

Before becoming a CRNA, what was the most unusual or interesting job you've ever had?

When I was in high school, I worked at a Jimmy Buffett kiosk at the mall. My uniform was a tropical shirt with parrots all over it! This was my first introduction to cheeseburgers in paradise and probably my most unusual job.

What inspired you to become a CRNA?

My dad was my inspiration to become a CRNA. He used to work as a controller in our department. I knew I wanted a career in healthcare but was unsure of which direction I should go. He suggested I consider becoming a CRNA. I had a shadow experience at Presby and from there it became my focus and goal.

Please tell us a bit about your first clinical experience after completing your training.

One day in the first months of my career, I was working with a general surgeon and the first case was a colonoscopy. I wanted to be efficient and get the case started, so I called my attending after I was in the room and started the sedation. I was reminded that I was new and should have called prior to starting the sedation. This cemented for me the team model we work within and the importance of communication.

Who have been your most significant mentors?

I wanted to work at UPMC Shadyside because I have a large amount of respect for the skill, expertise, and adaptability of the anesthesia providers there. So many of these great anesthesiologists have contributed pieces to the anesthesiologist I have become. The people who shaped me most and who I sought to emulate are Mike Chaklos, Sandy Letterle, and Amy Herrmann. I have learned so much about anesthesia and about life from the whole group. We all have a hard job and are striving for the best for our patients. These providers have helped me to accept and manage challenging situations when they arise and work through the decision making process.

What has been the biggest reward in your career?

Every day comes with a reward when you remember we are here for the patients. It is immensely rewarding when asked to provide care for a coworker or a coworker's loved one. It is also rewarding to deliver a challenging case into the hands of the PACU RN in stable condition. I always enjoy a patient's surprise when they realize we have arrived in the recovery room.

What has been the biggest challenge in your career?

The biggest challenges come when I am serving as a charge CRNA. I have learned and grown a lot through those days. The tasks of resource distribution, organization, and case flow, mixed in with a wide variety of personalities, expectations, and patients, has been a test of my flexibility and stress management.

What advice do you have for aspiring CRNAs?

Life as a CRNA is very fulfilling. You have the opportunity to develop a broad skill set and work in a constantly changing and adapting environment. You care for people at their most vulnerable and ask them to trust you and take excellent care of them while they have no idea what is happening. It takes hard work, commitment, and collaboration, but if you are willing to accept the challenge, I doubt you will face regret.



Kristen Shubert, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Shadyside



Kristen with fellow Shadyside CRNAs at the UPMC Presbyterian/Shadyside Medical Staff Gala in December 2022. L to R: Alexandra Uram, Kristen Shubert, Tera Thomas, Melissa Aretz, Samantha Berry, and Jillianne Oster.

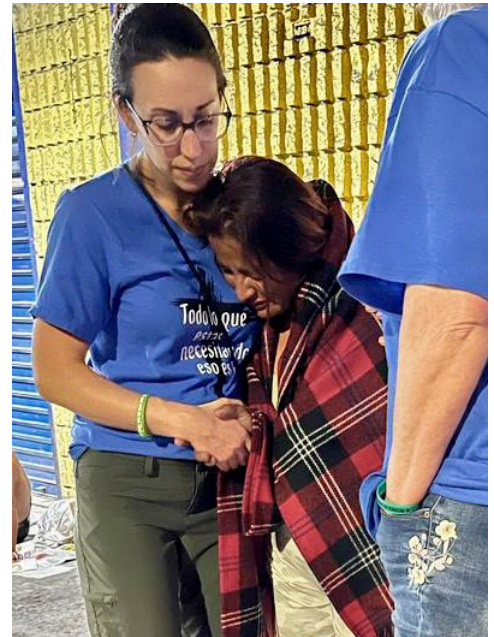
What has been your proudest non-work accomplishment?

I am most proud of the two trips I took with my church to El Salvador. I experienced spiritual and emotional growth and found a resilience in myself I did not expect. Our focus during these trips was the women and children. We visited orphanages, distributed food bags, sought out the homeless and prostitutes, and sat with communities of women to share love, support, and prayer. My husband and kids were so supportive through the whole process. I am proud of the work I did in El Salvador, and I am proud of the work my family did at home so it could happen.

What might the department be surprised to know about you?

I completed international clinical rotations in undergraduate and graduate school. While at Duquesne, I went to Nicaragua for a week as part of a psychology and community health rotation. We visited a psychiatric hospital there and learned about problems with access to care and medication for this population. We spent most of our time in the community, working with specific families and providing education on dental health, food choices, and general hygiene. We also discussed managing pregnancy and infant care because of the prevalence of teen pregnancy.

While in graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh, I went with Rick Henker for a two week rotation in Cambodia. Most of our time there was spent with a plastic surgeon. We provided anesthesia and performed nerve blocks for a variety of procedures, including many cleft lip and burn scar revisions. These trips demonstrated the privilege of access to care we experience in the United States.

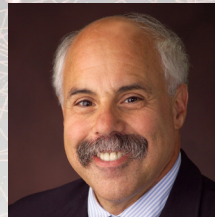


Kristen helping a blind, homeless woman in El Salvador.

New Leadership Appointments



Franklyn P. Cladis, MD, MBA, FAAP
Chief Anesthesiologist
UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh



Peter J. Davis, MD
Director of Pediatric Perioperative Care and System Director of Pediatric Anesthesiology



Eric Magda, MD
Medical Director
Chronic Pain Management, UPMC Jameson



David J. Sinopoli, MD, MPH, MBA
Chief Anesthesiologist
UPMC Altoona
Director of Perioperative Operations
UPMC Perioperative Services



Aman Mahajan, MD, PhD, MBA
Senior Vice President of Health Innovation
UPMC Enterprises



Lieu Tran, MD
Director
Combined Pediatrics Anesthesiology Residency Program

New Team Members



Rose Barlow
Clinical Research
Assistant OB &
Women's Health



Paramita Basu, PhD
Research Assistant
Professor



Barbara Beatty
Pre-Award Manager,
Research Administration



Jessica Boateng, DO
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Children's



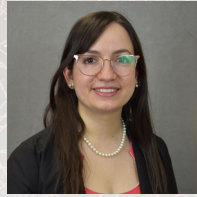
Peter Boateng, DO
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC East/
UPMC Pain Management
at UPMC Outpatient
Center in West Mifflin



**Sydney
Callenberger**
Research Technician,
Taylor lab



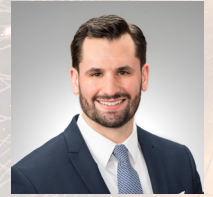
Michael Desciak, MD
Assistant Professor,
UPMC Shadyside/UPMC
Pain Management at
UPMC Passavant



**Melissa Giraldo
Duque, MD**
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Altoona



**Lauren M.
Hammell, DO**
Clinical Assistant
Professor
UPMC Horizon /
UPMC Jameson



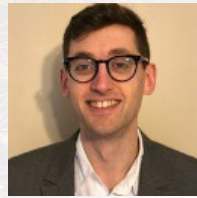
Ryan Holden, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Shadyside/UPMC Pain
Management at UPMC
Passavant



Samuel T. Joseph, MD
Assistant Professor,
UPMC Shadyside



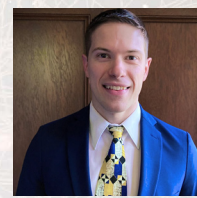
**Rebecca E.
Kotcher, MD**
T32 Postdoctoral
Scholar



Ryan Kotecki, DO
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Children's Hospital of
Pittsburgh



Yuki Kuwabara, MD
Assistant Professor,
Mahajan lab



Zachary Ligus, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Mercy



Jacob Ludin, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Mercy/UPMC East



**Joseph D.
Macchetta**
Clinical Research
Assistant, Clinical
Research Program



**Lauryn MacFawn,
DNP, CRNA**
UPMC Presbyterian



**Heather Margonari,
DNP, FNP-BC**
Center for
Innovation in Pain
Care



Thomas Pham, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Altoona



**Marcus
Simmons, MD**
T32 Postdoctoral
Scholar



Mckenzie Smail
Financial Assistant
Research
Administration



**Timothy
Swiatkowski, MD**
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Shadyside/
UPMC Mercy



**Brandon Staub,
MD, MS**
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC Pain
Management at UPMC
Horizon



Jennifer Turner, RN
OP Nurse
Coordinator,
Division of Chronic
Pain Medicine



Holly Turula, MD
Clinical Assistant
Professor UPMC
Children's/Shadyside



Matt Yin, MD, MBA
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Shadyside



Adam Zurney, DO
Clinical Assistant
Professor, UPMC
Shadyside/
UPMC Mercy

New Team Members, Not Pictured

Yun Chen
Research Coordinator
Clinical Research Program

Kathy Crivelli, DO
Clinical Assistant Professor
UPMC Horizon

Christopher Germond, DO
Clinical Assistant Professor
UPMC East

David Duggan
Systems Analyst – Senior
UPMC Department of Anesthesiology
and Perioperative Medicine /
Department of Surgery

Luz Gotham, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Horizon/Jameson

Luciana Guerra, MD
Clinical Assistant Professor
UPMC East

Olivia Jarvis
Clinical Research Specialist
OB & Women's Health

Jacqueline Kuth, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Horizon/Jameson

Yuli Lee
Clinical Research Specialist
Clinical Research Program

Nicholas Charles Lubresky
Clinical Research Coordinator
Clinical Research Program

Elise Malcho
Clinical Research Coordinator
Clinical Research Program

Andrew F. Meister, MD
Clinical Assistant Professor
UPMC Presbyterian

Alexa Mermigas, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital

Martha Miskanic
Research Specialist
Farris lab

Michele Mulkeen
Research Technician
Howard-Quijano lab

Shannon O'Brien
Senior Financial Administrator
Clinical Research Program

Barkha Patel
Clinical Research Assistant
OB & Women's Health

Uppala Radhakrishna, PhD
Research Associate Professor

Alexandra Rooney, MD
Clinical Assistant Professor, UPMC
Mercy/UPMC Magee-Womens
Hospital

Andrey Romanov, CNP
Communications &
Digital Media Specialist

Destin Rothe
Research Specialist
Alter lab

Sandy Tadros, MD
Clinical Assistant Professor
UPMC Shadyside

Rafael Velez, MD
Clinical Assistant Professor
UPMC East

Veronica Wade
Senior Financial Administrator
Research Administration

Nicole Willman
CRNP, Senior
UPMC Presbyterian

Retirements

Congratulations to all our July 2022 - June 2023 retirees!
Wishing you all a happy and well-deserved retirement!



Cheryl L. Baluh, CRNA
UPMC East
10 years



Karen A. Florian, CRNA
UPMC
Presbyterian
35 years



Patricia A. Martucci, MHS, CRNA
UPMC Passavant
Over 22 years



Linda McElrath, CRNA
UPMC South Surgery
Center (Bethel), over
24 years



Thomas M. Janczewski, CRNA
UPMC Magee
17 years



Leslie O'Connor, CRNA
UPMC Mercy
over 46 years



Karen S. Sapochak, CRNA
UPMC McKeesport
over 36 years



David B. Rymer, MD
UPMC Children's
17 years



Joseph J. Quinlan, MD
UPMC
Presbyterian
Over 34 years



Dolores M. Trop, CRNA
UPMC Mercy
over 42 years

Not Pictured:

Constance Chosky
UPMC Presbyterian, over 4 years

Mohan ETTYREDDY, MD
UPMC Horizon, ver 15 years

Charles H. Richards, MD
UPMC St. Margaret, 18 years

Debby Sines
UPMC Magee, 28 years

Accolades

CHAIR'S EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Congratulations to the faculty and CRNAs who were selected as recipients of our department's 2023 Chair's Excellence Awards. These individuals are recognized by our Chair Dr. Aman Mahajan and department leaders for going above and beyond in their service to our patients and department. This annual award was established to recognize and honor outstanding contributions by our faculty and CRNAs who exemplify our guiding principles and core values and embody the attributes outlined by our clinical, research, and educational mission.

These clinicians are recognized as ambassadors of our department's expectations of values and behaviors. They drive excellence in everything they do, achieve goals (for themselves and others), enable quality improvements, provide exceptional patient care and support for colleagues, exemplify outstanding service through their work, and exhibit a positive and supportive attitude.

Our Chair's Excellence Awards align with UPP's and our department's select shared values. We honor the following faculty and CRNAs for their exceptional contributions in the below areas.

Compassionate Care



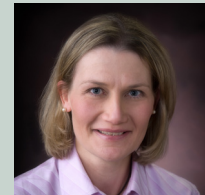
Michael K. Chaklos, CRNA
UPMC Shadyside



Katherine M. Pyros, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh



Peter J. Ritchie, MD
UPMC Presbyterian



Mercedes Cristina Roosen-Marcos, MD
UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh

Professionalism



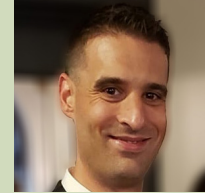
Karen Ferguson, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Digestive Health and Endoscopy Center



Joshua Knight, MD, FASE
UPMC Presbyterian



Charles Lin, MD, MSc
UPMC Passavant



Shawn M. West, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Network

Exceptional Service



Konstantinos Alfaras-Melainis, MD, MSc
UPMC Mercy



Liliana Berezhna, MHS, CRNA
UPMC Presbyterian



Dale E. Heron, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Presbyterian



Adam Hill, MD
UPMC Shadyside



Joseph S. DeRenzo, MD
UPMC Magee



Kirsten Radaker, MSN, CRNA
UPMC Mercy

Outstanding Leadership

Accolades

ACES

We are proud to share our winners of the 2022 UPMC Award for Commitment and Excellence in Service (ACES). ACES honors the most outstanding employees within UPMC - staff who exemplify UPMC's five core values — Quality & Safety, Dignity & Respect, Caring & Listening, Responsibility & Integrity, and Excellence & Innovation. Each year, fewer than 1% of UPMC staff from across the health system receive this great honor. This year we had two winners - **Dr. Kimberly Cantees** and **Stacy Clever** (UPMC Pain Management).



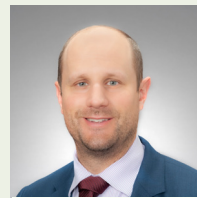
Kimberly Cantees,
MD, MBA



Stacy Clever

TOP DOCTORS

Congratulations to **Drs. Trent Emerick** and **Ajay Wasan**, who were named in *Pittsburgh Magazine's* 2023 "Top Doctors" list in the specialty of pain medicine. The Top Doctors list is compiled annually by Castle Connolly, a trusted and credible healthcare research and information company with a mission to help people find the best healthcare by connecting patients with best-in-class healthcare providers.



Trent D. Emerick,
MD, MBA, FASA



Ajay D. Wasan,
MD, MSc

PAMED TOP PHYSICIANS UNDER 40

Dr. Elizabeth Ungerman was named as a Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) 2023 Top Physician Under 40. Annually, this honor recognizes talented "best of the best" early career physicians who already are performing at a high level. As members of the Allegheny County Medical Society (ACMS), Dr. Ungerman and 2022 PAMED Top Physician Under 40 awardees **Drs. Phil Adams** and **Michael Best** were honored at the ACMS Honors Event at the Heinz History Center on April 27, 2023.



Elizabeth
Ungerman,
MD, MS



Phillip Adams,
DO, FASA



Michael W. Best,
MD, FASA,
Maj, USAFR

NURSING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Richard Henker and **John O'Donnell**, CRNAs in our department as well as faculty members in the School of Nursing/Department of Nurse Anesthesia, received Sigma International Awards for Nursing Excellence. Professor Henker was awarded the Dorothy Garrigus Adams Award for Excellence in Service and Professor O'Donnell was awarded the Lucie S. Kelly Mentor Award. [Read more](#)



Richard Henker,
MS, MSN, PhD,
CRNA



John O'Donnell,
DrPH, CRNA

Accolades

AAP AWARDS

October 23-27th was UPMC's APPreciation Week, a celebration of our health system's incredible advanced practice providers (APPs). The celebration was marked by a series of meaningful events, giveaways, and educational conferences, including the highly anticipated presentation of UPMC's annual APP Awards. Several of our department's APPs received well-deserved recognition:

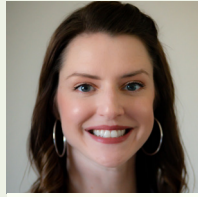
CRNAs **Joshua Allender** (UPMC Altoona), **Kathy Pyros** (UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh), and **Leann McDonald** (UPMC Passavant) won system-wide APP Awards. Josh won the **APP Preceptor of the Year Award**; Kathy won the **APP Community Service Champion Award**; and Leann won the **APP Rising Star Award**. Dr. **Franklyn Cladis** won a UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh **APP Physician Champion of the Year Award**. CRNA **Gregory Romano** won the **UPMC Passavant Outstanding APP Award** and Dr. **Anthony Silipo** won the **UPMC Passavant APP Supporter Award**.



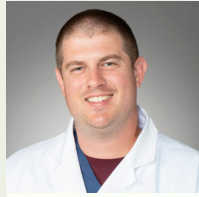
Joshua
Allender, MS,
CRNA



Katherine M.
Pyros, MSN,
CRNA



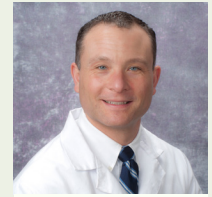
Leann
McDonald,
DNAP, CRNA



Gregory
Romano, MSN,
CRNA



Franklyn P.
Cladis, MD,
MBA, FAAP



Anthony T.
Silipo, DO

FACULTY RANK PROMOTIONS

Congratulations and thank you to the following department faculty members for their many contributions to our specialty and academic medicine, as well as their leadership service and remarkable milestones in clinical care, teaching, and research. **Drs. Adams, Boisen, Esper, Gierl, and Vogt** were promoted to **Associate Professor**; **Dr. Luke** was promoted to **Clinical Associate Professor**; **Drs. Drabek and Gelzinis** were promoted to **Professor**; and **Dr. Sadhasivam** was promoted to **Professor with Tenure**.



Phillip Adams,
DO, FASA



Michael Boisen,
MD, FASE



Tomas Drabek,
MD, PhD, FASA



Stephen A.
Esper, MD, MBA



Theresa A.
Gelzinis, MD



Brian Gierl, MD



Charles Luke,
MD, MBA,
FASAM



Senthil
Sadhasivam, MD,
MPH, MBA, FASA



Keith M. Vogt,
MD, PhD, FASA

Accolades



Serafina M. Bear, MSN, CRNA, won a UPMC Physician Services' "Extra Mile" Award.



Andrew Herlich, DMD, MD, FAAP, FASA, received the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons Distinguished Service Award for Non-Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons.



Gaurav Chauhan, MD, won the UPMC Physician Excellence Award – UPMC New Physician Excellence in Clinical Care.



Andrea Ibarra, MD, MS, presented grand rounds as a Visiting Professor at the Yale University Department of Anesthesiology via the UPMC-Yale Visiting Professor Exchange Program.



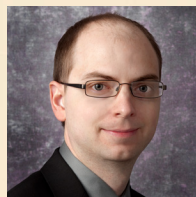
Suellen J. Gallegos, MSN, CRNA, received a 2023 Cameos of Caring® Award.



Grace Lim, MD, MS, was appointed to serve as the American Society of Anesthesiologists' liaison to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health's Clinical and Community Advisory Group.



Wende A. Goncz, DO, MMM, received the Reverend William A. Passavant Humanitarian Award.



Keith M. Vogt, MD, PhD, FASA, was elected to the Association of University Anesthesiologists as an Active Member.

FFAST GRADUATES

Our Faculty Fellow Advanced Scholarship Training (FFAST) Career Development Program provides financial support for our faculty to pursue advanced degrees in health fields outside anesthesiology to launch subspecialty teams. These opportunities have led to innovative research on topics such as OR management, clinical and research predictive modeling, cost savings models, and OR staffing strategies.

Congratulations to Drs. Luca La Colla and Charles Lin, who recently completed studies to earned degrees through the FFAST Program! Please [visit our website](#) for more information on FFAST and to read testimonials from FFAST graduates.



Luca La Colla, MD, MSHI, earned a Master of Science in Health Informatics from the University of Pittsburgh.



Charles Lin MD, MSc, earned a Master of Science in Clinical Research - Comparative Effectiveness from the University of Pittsburgh Institute for Clinical Research Education.

In the Press



News articles in UPMC's *Inside Life Changing Medicine*, *NPR*, *The Allegheny Front*, *Becker's ASC Review*, and *Environmental Health News* showcased the work of Clinicians for Climate Action, a coalition of healthcare

professionals committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from healthcare systems in Pennsylvania and beyond. **Isabela Angelelli, MD**, is Co-Chair of the coalition, and several other clinicians in our department are involved in the group's projects to reduce our carbon footprint, such as development of a reusable blood pressure cuff, switching to reusable fingertip sensors to measure blood oxygen levels, and eliminating UPMC's use of desflurane, an anesthetic gas that's 3,700 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

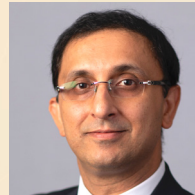


The WPXI Community Matters segment "**Cutting Edge Techniques for Knee Surgery**" featured **John M. Borza, MBA, DNP, CRNA**. UPMC orthopaedic surgeon and Sports Medicine Chief Dr. Volker Musahl successfully repaired John's

knee after he injured it while training for running. After his recovery, John went on to complete the New York City Marathon!

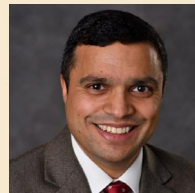


Trent D. Emerick, MD, MBA, FASA, was featured in The American Society of Regional Anesthesia and Pain Medicine **March 2023 Member Spotlight**.



An artificial intelligence-based model developed by our Chair **Aman Mahajan, MD, PhD, MBA**, with Oscar C. Marroquin, MD, FACC (UPMC Chief Health Care Data and Analytics Officer and Associate Professor of Medicine, Epidemiology, and

Clinical and Translational Science at Pitt) and other Pitt/UPMC researchers was featured in a **news release and several news articles**.



The pioneering work of Dr. Mahajan and **Ramakrishna Mukkamala, PhD**, in the realm of cardiovascular monitoring technologies was recognized in *Pittwire*, the **Pitt Engineering website**, *Knowable Magazine*, *Medscape*, *Medscape Commentary*, and *Android Police*.



Ajay D. Wasan, MD, MSc, was quoted in the May 22, 2023 *New York Times* article, "**Scientists Find Brain Signals of Chronic Pain**" (subscription required).



The June 2023 edition of *Anesthesiology News* featured **two articles** spotlighting work presented

by our residents **Zhongheng "John" Yin, MD**, and **Lauren Nahouraii, MD**, at the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) 2022 meeting and the 2023 ASA ADVANCE meetings, respectively.

New Grants



Jacques E. Chelly, MD, PhD, MBA, "Surgical Opioid Stewardship Program," Shadyside Hospital Foundation



Marsha Ritter Jones, MD, PhD, "Neuroimmune Signaling in Surgical Wound Healing and Modulation by Regional Anesthesia," NIH/National Institute of General Medical Sciences



Michael S. Gold, PhD, "Training in Mechanisms and Clinical Presentation of Pain," National Institutes of Health (NIH)/National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke T32 renewal



Opalgex (Pitt PI: **Senthil Sadhasivam, MD, MPH, MBA, FASA,** "Improving Analgesic Effectiveness and Safety with Proactive Precision Pain Management in Thoracic Surgical Patients with Lung Lesions," NIH/NHLBI



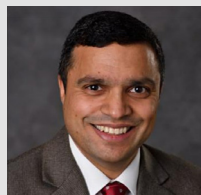
Andrea Ibarra, MD, MS, "The Effect of Preeclampsia on Cognitive Function," Society for Obstetric Anesthesia and Perinatology/Foundation for Anesthesia Education and Research

Opalgex (Pitt PI: **Senthil Sadhasivam, MD, MPH, MBA, FASA,** "Predicting and Preventing Adverse Maternal and Child Outcomes of Opioid Use Disorder in Pregnancy," NIH/National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)



Grace Lim, MD, MS, "Ketamine to Reduce Postpartum Depression and Pain after Cesarean Delivery," NIH/National Institute of Mental Health

Neuroptics (Pitt PI: **Senthil Sadhasivam, MD, MPH, MBA, FASA,** "Development and Commercialization of a Pupillometer to Predict Postoperative Opioid-Induced Respiratory Depression in Children," NIH/NIDA

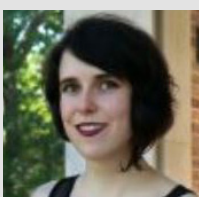


Siamak Salavatian, PhD, "Efficacy of ULF SCS on Reducing Cardiac Arrhythmias," Presidio Medical

Aman Mahajan, MD, PhD, and Ramakrishna Mukkamala, PhD, "Smart Cuff: Multi-Parameter Hemodynamic Monitoring via a Single Convenient Device," NIH/National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)

Marcia Timko-Shannon, MD, "Translation of Obstetric Consents for our Limited-English-Proficiency Patients," Magee-Womens Research Institute and Foundation

Sensydia Corporation (Pitt PI: **Aman Mahajan, MD, PhD**) "A Non-Invasive, Automated Platform for Hemodynamic Assessment of Patients at Risk of Heart Failure or Pulmonary Hypertension," NIH/NHLBI



Rachel Rice, "The Role of lncRNA Gas5 in Glucocorticoid-Mediated Ethanol Dependence Phenotypes," NIH/National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism F31 award (Primary Sponsor: **Sean P. Farris, PhD**; Co-Sponsor: **Gregg E. Homanics, PhD**)



Ajay D. Wasan, MD, MSc, "Personalized Pain Treatment, Phase II" UPMC Enterprises

Publications

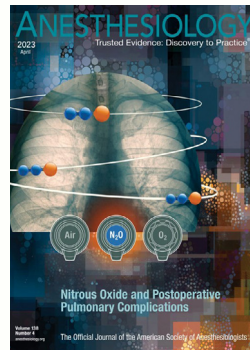
We produced **135 publications** from March 1 - October 31, 2023. Below are some highlights. A list of department publications can be viewed **on PubMed**.

We began publishing monthly reports to share comprehensive lists of citations/links to our most recent scientific publications. Stay abreast of our cutting-edge research by visiting the **"Publications" section** on our website or by following us on our social media channels.



The **April 2023** issue of *Anesthesia & Analgesia* (A&A) included an inaugural high-impact bundle of six articles and infographics addressing distinct approaches to advancing perioperative medicine and broadening its scope in health care, accompanied by an **editorial** by our Chair, **Aman Mahajan, MD, PhD, MBA**, and Monty (Michael) Mythen, MBBS,

MD, FRCA (Department of Anaesthesia and Critical Care, University College London, London, United Kingdom). A&A also released several podcasts and webinars related to this high-impact bundle.



The April 2023 edition of *Anesthesiology* featured an **article** from our multidisciplinary team of cardiovascular, neuroscience, bioengineering, and biophysics researchers - authors **Kimberly Howard-Quijano, MD, MS, FASE**; **Yuki Kuwabara, MD**; **Tomoki Yamaguchi, MD**; **Kenny M. Roman, PhD**; **Siamak Salavatian,**

PhD; **Bradley K. Taylor, PhD**; and **Aman Mahajan, MD, PhD, MBA**, with an accompanying editorial and podcast.



A digital copy of the autobiography of **Peter Safar, MD**, is now available free of charge on the **Wood Library website**. This remarkable book covers fascinating milestones in Dr. Safar's life, including the birth of CPR, the groundbreaking

Freedom House Ambulance Service, and the origins of our department and the Department of Critical Care Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh.



Grace Lim, MD, MS, was part of a multidisciplinary international working group that authored clinical practice guidelines on postdural puncture headache that were concurrently published in the journals *Regional Anesthesia & Pain Medicine*

and *JAMA Network Open*. The articles represent a stupendous effort across several professional societies that transcend the disciplines of obstetric and general anesthesiology, pain medicine, neurology, and radiology.

Department authors - we need your help to publicize crucial research findings! If you have a paper accepted for publication that you believe will be of interest to a non-academic audience, please promptly send your acceptance email and manuscript to anescommunications@upmc.edu. Our UPMC/Pitt media representatives will evaluate publications for noteworthy discoveries and orchestrate publicity and interviews, aligning with each paper's embargo date, to ensure your findings reach a wider audience. For the best chance of success, several weeks of lead time before publication are needed to craft a dissemination plan that accurately conveys your research, so the earlier you contact us, the better.

Meeting Highlights

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

NPY-PYY-PP RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Read the full meeting recap [on our website](#)



We were honored to host the 13th International NPY-PYY-PP Research Conference on July 15-18, 2023 at Posvar Hall on the University of Pittsburgh campus. NPY-PYY-PP Research Conferences are held every two to three years and organized by a consortium of leading international scientists in the field of peptide research – a group that includes **Bradley K. Taylor, PhD**, from our department. Each member of the consortium takes turns hosting the conference. In 2023, Dr. Taylor was selected to organize and chair the meeting.

The NPY-PYY-PP Research Conference is an international gathering of researchers, scientists, and experts from academic institutions all over the world who are interested in peptides and their role in conditions like pain, psychiatric disorders, the brain, metabolism, stress, etc. The 2023 meeting attracted around 90 trainees, faculty members, and industry attendees from 13 countries. The four-day event featured the keynote lecture "A 50-Year Odyssey Through Neuropeptide Country" presented by Dr. Tomas Hökfelt from Karolinska Institutet in Sweden, lectures presented by 60 speakers from 10 countries, and short presentations and posters selected from abstracts submitted by trainees. A future accompanying special issue of the journal *Neuropeptides* will include reviews, original articles, and abstracts from the meeting.

The meeting culminated in a gala dinner/social event at Pittsburgh's Andy Warhol Museum, where guests enjoyed food, drinks, and guided tours of the Warhol galleries. The evening ended in an awards presentation and closing ceremony presented by Dr. Taylor. Eighteen participants won awards, including **Abby Hellman** from our department, who won a Postdoc Oral Presentation Award for her presentation "Intranasal NPY Y1 Agonist in a Pig Pain Model."

Thank you to the many attendees from around the world who for joined us in Pittsburgh for the 2023 meeting!

NATIONAL EVENTS

ANESTHESIOLOGY 2023



ANESTHESIOLOGY 2023, the annual meeting of the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA), was held in San Francisco, CA from October 13-17, 2023. We delivered 74 presentations and eight workshops; eight faculty members moderated or facilitated sessions or workshops; and 27 faculty members and three residents served on ASA and ASA-related committees. We were also thrilled to see so many of our colleagues at our annual alumni reception at Park Chalet! A schedule of our presentations and listing of our representation at the meeting is available in our **2023 ASA Meeting Companion** (PDF) on our website.

Meeting Highlights

SPRING SOCIETY MEETINGS

Spring 2023 was a very busy time, with a whirlwind of annual society meetings held between March and May. Click the name of each meeting to see a corresponding article on our website about our participation:

American Academy of Pain Medicine
March 23-26, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

AUA/SOCCA/IARS/SATA
April 13-17, Denver, CO

SPPM/CCAS/SPA/AAP
March 30 - April 2, Austin, TX

Society for Education in Anesthesia
April 14 - 16, Seattle, WA

ASRA
April 20-22, Hollywood, FL

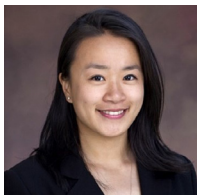
SOAP
May 3-7, New Orleans, LA

SCA/Thoracic Anesthesia/COR-PM
May 5-9, Portland, OR

AWARDS



Paramita Basu, PhD, from the laboratory of Bradley K. Taylor, PhD, won the Best Poster Presentation in Basic Science Award at the US Association for the Study of Pain meeting, April 11-14, 2023 in Durham, NC. The award was for her abstract "Kappa Opioid Receptors Suppress Latent Postoperative Pain Sensitization: Insights from Dorsal Root Ganglion Conditional Knockout and Spinal Chemogenetic Studies," which she coauthored with her postdoctoral mentor Dr. Brad Taylor.



Jingyuan (Jenny) Biaisch, DO, won the Best Abstract Presentation Award at the Pennsylvania Society of Anesthesiologists (PSA) annual meeting held at Union League Liberty Hill on March 3-5, 2023. She won the award for her poster "Intraoperative Neuromonitoring Changes Predict Post-Operative Delirium in Patients Undergoing Major Cardiac Surgery," which she coauthored with Drs. Senthikumar Sadhasivam, Kathirvel Subramaniam, Keith Vogt, and Pooja Sree Tallapaneni from our department; Drs. Parthasarathy Thirumala, Vamsi Krishna Gorijala, Omar AL Ta'ani, and Abdullah AL Qudah from Pitt Neurosurgery; Dr. Neelesh Nadkarni (Pitt Geriatrics Division); and Victoria Kiselevskaya (Pitt Otolaryngology).



Simer Bains, MD, (right, Residency Class of 2022) along with his mentor and study principal investigator **Phillip Adams, DO, FASA**, (left) received a "Best Poster" award at the 2023 CCAS Meeting. Their abstract was selected as one of only five to be delivered as an oral presentation.

"Intraoperative Hemodynamic Variables are not Predictive of Greater Mortality After Thoracic Aortic Surgery in Females" by **Aaron Tarnasky, MD**; **Tanya Kenkre, PhD, MPH**; **Adam McIntyre-Smith, MD**; **John Driggers, BS**; and **Kimberly Howard-Quijano, MD, MS, FASE**, was recognized as a Best of Meeting Oral Abstract Presentation at the 2023 SCA Meeting.

Meeting Highlights

LOCAL EVENTS

PARRC 2023



Read the full meeting recap [on our website](#)

We were honored to host the 17th Annual Pennsylvania Anesthesiology Resident Research Conference (PARRC) here in Pittsburgh on May 13, 2023, our fourth time hosting (we also hosted PARRC in 2008, 2014, and 2019). This event showcased the research and talent of residents from residency programs across Pennsylvania. Programs participating in 2023 were Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Temple University, Thomas Jefferson University, University of Pennsylvania Health System (Penn), and us (UPMC).

Thirteen residents won awards for their presentations of their scholarly work. Congratulations to all the winners, including the below residents from our department! Thank you to all our participants and attendees for joining us in Pittsburgh for the 2023 event.

ORAL PRESENTATION - ORIGINAL RESEARCH



Aaron Tarnasky, MD, MPH, 3rd place – tie: "Association of Regional Anesthesia with Post-Operative Ulnar Nerve Symptoms for Patients with Pre-Existing Ulnar Nerve Dysfunction Undergoing Ulnar Nerve Transposition, Decompression, or Neurolysis"

ORAL PRESENTATION - CASE REPORT

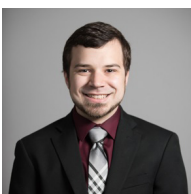


Monique Cheng, MD, 1st place: "Management of Arteriovenous Malformation Rupture Following Cesarean Delivery in a Parturient with Hereditary Hemorrhagic Telangiectasia"

POSTER PRESENTATION - ORIGINAL RESEARCH



Samuel Kosinski, MD, MHSA, MS, 1st place: "A Multi-Provider Approach to Improving Anesthetizing Location Capacity with Increasing Surgical Demand"



Matthew Kocher, MD, 3rd place: "Utility of Peripheral Nerve Blocks in Pediatric Patients Undergoing Embolization Therapy for Vascular Malformations"

POSTER PRESENTATION - CASE REPORT

Samuel Kosinski, MD, MHSA, MS, 1st place: "Splenic Embolization as a Perioperative Bridge to Splenectomy in Severe Treatment-Resistant ITP"



Natale DeMarco, Jr., DO, 2nd place: "Severe Dysrhythmia and Cardiac Arrest Following Administration of Sugammadex"



Mariusz Ligocki, MD, 3rd place: "Odds are High That (SVR) Systemic Vascular Resistance will be Low: Intraoperative Management of Mast Cell Activation Syndrome"

Meeting Highlights

LOCAL EVENTS

SAFAR SYMPOSIUM/MULTI-DEPARTMENTAL TRAINEES' RESEARCH DAY

Read the full meeting recap [on our website](#)

The 20th annual Safar Symposium and 13th annual Multi-Departmental Trainees' Research Day was held on May 18-19, 2023. The theme of the 2023 event was Paradigm Shifts in Brain Injury Research.

The Multi-Departmental Trainees' Research Day is a collaboration between the Departments of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, Critical Care Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Neurological Surgery, and Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, as well as the Winter Institute for Simulation Education and Research (WISER). Forty-one posters were presented in addition to five oral presentations from one trainee in each of the collaborating departments.



L to R: Sydney Lamerand, Emanuel Loeza-Alcocer, and Abigail Hellman

The first-place oral presentation award was presented to **Sydney Lamerand**, a graduate student in the University of Pittsburgh's Center for Neuroscience Training Program working with mentor Bradley Taylor, PhD, for her presentation "Modulation of Neuropathic Pain in Multiple Sclerosis by Spinal Microglia and Sphingosine-1-Phosphate Receptor S1PR1." The first-place poster award went to **Emanuel Loeza-Alcocer, PhD**, from the laboratory of Michael Gold, PhD, for his presentation "Effect of Dorsal Root Ganglion Stimulation on Orthodromic Compound Action Potentials." The second-place poster award went to our T32 postdoctoral scholar **Abigail Hellman, PhD**, for her poster presentation titled "Neuropeptide Y1 Interneurons in Inflammatory Pain Circuits."

SRNA STUDENT MENTORSHIP WORKSHOP

Read the full meeting recap [on our website](#)



L to R: John O'Donnell, DrPH, CRNA; Laurel Anderson Miner, PhD, CRNA; Toni Orsino, MBA, CRNA; Dale Fleck, MSN, CRNA

In collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh Nurse Anesthesia Program, we cohosted a Student Mentorship Workshop on November 4, 2023 at UPMC Shadyside. This gathering marked the commencement of the student registered nurse anesthetist (SRNA) class of 2025's journey into the clinical arena, fostering a spirit of mentorship, teamwork, and knowledge sharing.

At the heart of the event was the pairing of each student with a mentor, enabling them to engage in collaborative exercises designed to promote growth and mutual support. The day was further enriched by participation from prominent figures in the field of nurse anesthesia, including **Marc Wicker, MSN, CRNA**, nurse anesthetist at UPMC Presbyterian and UPP System Education Coordinator, **Toni Orsino, MBA, CRNA**, Senior CRNA Director in our department, **John M.**

O'Donnell, DrPH, CRNA, Chair of the Department of Nurse Anesthesia and Director of the Pitt Nurse Anesthesia Program, and **Laurel Anderson Miner, PhD, CRNA**, Assistant Program Director and Vice Chair of Administration in the Pitt Department of Nurse Anesthesia.

The workshop exceeded all expectations, drawing an enthusiastic and diverse crowd of SRNAs and CRNAs, including the wholehearted participation of many of our CRNA Site Clinical Directors.

Community Outreach

Our department actively participates in community service, showcasing a profound commitment to creating a positive impact. Whether through fundraising, mentorship, or raising awareness of social issues, the clinicians highlighted below embody our unwavering dedication to compassionate healthcare and impactful community outreach.



CRNAs from UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital joined UPMC Children's Hospital Foundation for the "Walk for Children's" event on June 3, 2023. Families, staff, and community members walked in support and in celebration of the patients at UPMC Children's Hospital.

Our CRNAs set up a team under the Magee Anesthesia Cares (MAC) committee to help raise money to fund care for children in need, especially those requiring extended and involved care. MAC's team included **Clarice Johns, DNP, CRNA**; **Connor McClellan, DNP, CRNA**; **Sera Bear MSN, CRNA**; **Tom Janczewski MSN, CRNA**; and **Donna Koleck, MSN, CRNA**, as walkers, both in-person and virtually. The event was a success, raising over \$1,020,000 in total.



Kathy Pyros, MSN, CRNA, ran in the Pittsburgh Marathon on May 7, 2023 as part of "Team Children's" to raise funds for UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. Kathy and her efforts will help provide critical care and support for pediatric patients and their families.

To donate to UPMC Children's Hospital Foundation, please visit givetochildrens.org.



The UPMC Presbyterian-Shadyside Diversity Mentorship Program was launched on June 13, 2023. Together with Danielle Robinson (Presbyterian Nursing), **David A. Snyder, MSN, CRNA**, from UPMC Shadyside is leading the program, which targets

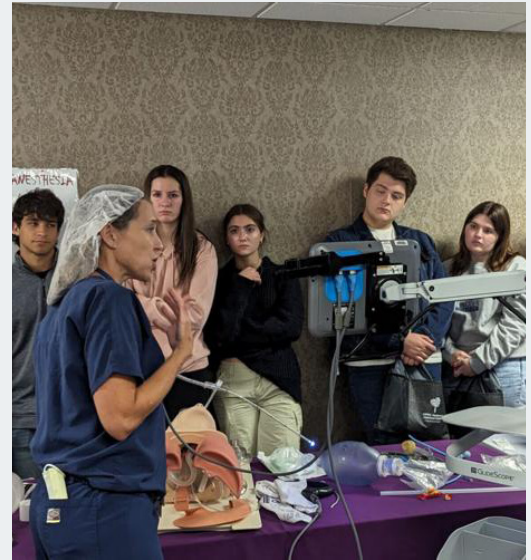
emerging leaders among employees of color from UPMC Presbyterian and Shadyside hospitals. The program is dedicated to empowering employees of color through a one-on-one mentorship program that will foster positive relationships in which mentors empower mentees and accelerate the mentees' personal and professional development.



Community Outreach

Cynthia M. Wells, MD, took the stage alongside her colleagues from UPMC Jameson for the hospital's highly anticipated second annual Robotics Day on October 31, 2023. This event welcomed over 200 local high school and nursing students, offering them a rare glimpse into the cutting-edge robotics technology used at both UPMC Jameson and UPMC Horizon. The overarching goal of the day was to kindle the flames of inspiration and motivation in these students, encouraging them to contemplate futures in the ever-evolving field of medicine.

Dr. Wells conducted anesthesia treatment demonstrations for the students. Students also toured an ambulance, conducted a mock demonstration in an operating room, and learned about UPMC's "Minutes Matter" initiative, a program that aims to prepare individuals to help in emergencies. The students also enjoyed demonstrations of the da Vinci Surgical System and Mako Robotic Arm-Assisted Surgery, as well as the Victoria Doll labor delivery recovery machine.



The UPMC ENABLED employee resource group partnered with other UPMC groups to participate in Disability Mentoring Day at UPMC Mercy on October 18, 2023.

ENABLED stands for "Empowering Abilities and Leveraging Differences," and serves UPMC workers who have differing abilities to create a global, empowered culture of inclusivity that welcomes all employees without bias. ENABLED also works to attract and retain people with differing abilities and provides accommodations to staff and candidates for employment with differing abilities to enable them to perform the essential functions of their jobs.

Brett M. Fadgen, MSN, CFRN, CRNA, is a member of UPMC ENABLED and has worked for many years to raise awareness of the impact of unconscious bias on people with disabilities. Brett is a nurse anesthetist who was born with a congenital defect and uses a prosthetic arm. To our knowledge, Brett is the only person in the world with this type of disability who provides anesthesia at the CRNA level. He has devised innovative adaptive techniques and devices used to work in the operating room and demonstrated their success for clinicians. He's also worked closely to refine and test his skills with the Winter Institute for Simulation, Education and Research (WISER), which trains healthcare simulation professionals from around the world.

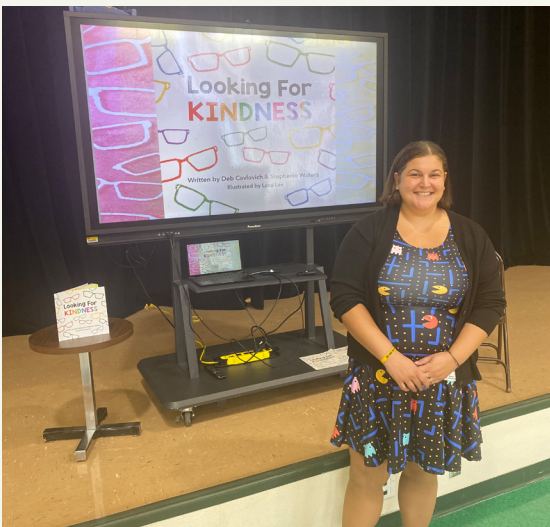


Twelve students from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit Pathfinder School participated in Disability Mentoring Day. The students learned how to perform first aid, apply bandages, listen to lung sounds, and how to take a pulse using SimBaby. They also watched demonstrations of adaptive devices Brett uses in the OR and learned about project search and employment opportunities UPMC has to offer.

Community Outreach



UPMC Shadyside and our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, in conjunction with M-PowerHouse, held two “Medical Milestones” events for high school students interested in pursuing degrees in anesthesiology and/or medicine on March 3, 2023 at Sto-Rox Junior-Senior High School in McKees Rocks, PA and on March 9, 2023 at Pittsburgh Public Schools Millions 6-12 University Preparatory School. Our Shadyside CRNAs **Jessica E. Kridler, MSN, CRNA**, and **Rachel Hicks, MSN, CRNA**, gave presentations and led demonstrations for students to practice intubation and bag mask ventilation techniques on training mannequins.



Stephanie A. Waters, MSN, CRNA (UPMC Mercy) co-authored a children's book in honor of her brother Kevin who passed away suddenly from encephalitis in January, aged 30.

Kevin Cavlovich, or “Mr. Kevin” as children referred to him, worked as a custodian at the Hosack Elementary School, part of the North Allegheny School District. Beloved by the community, Kevin shared his kindness day in and day out with students, teachers, and staff of the school. After his passing, the school honored him, and the children put together drawings to honor Kevin's acts of kindness.

Inspired by this outpouring of support and gratitude, Stephanie and her mother Deb Cavlovich turned their pain into purpose and wrote a children's book in Kevin's honor called "Looking for Kindness." This book and public readings as well as Kevin's story were featured on **CBS News**, **CBS News Pittsburgh**, and **WPXI Channel 11 Pittsburgh**.

Stephanie's book "Looking for Kindness" is available for purchase in paperback at **Amazon**, **Barnes & Noble**, and other retailers. All profits from book sales are put into Kevin's Kindness Campaign to continue to spread kindness in elementary schools in the Pittsburgh area. For more information about Kevin's Kindness Campaign, visit their **Instagram** or contact **belikemrkevin@gmail.com**.

Upcoming Events

2024 SAFAR SYMPOSIUM/TRAINEES' RESEARCH DAY



Building upon the Peter and Eva Safar Lectureship established in 1980 by Peter M. Winter, MD, (former chair of the Department of Anesthesiology and Critical Care Medicine), this yearly event honors the late Dr. Peter Safar and his wife Eva for their contributions to the scientific community and highlights current research in areas spanning Dr. Safar's scientific career and interests. The Trainees' Research Day is a collaboration between the Departments of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, Critical Care Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Neurological Surgery, and Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation, as well as the Winter Institute for Simulation Education and Research (WISER).

The 2024 event will be held Thursday, April 25 at the University Club and Friday, April 26 at WISER. Clifton W Callaway, MD, PhD, Distinguished Professor and Executive Vice Chair of Emergency Medicine and Ronald D. Steward Endowed Chair of Emergency Medicine Research at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine will serve as the 43rd Peter and Eva Safar Lecturer for the Sciences and Humanities. Save the date, and please visit the [Safar Center's website](#) for more details as they become available.

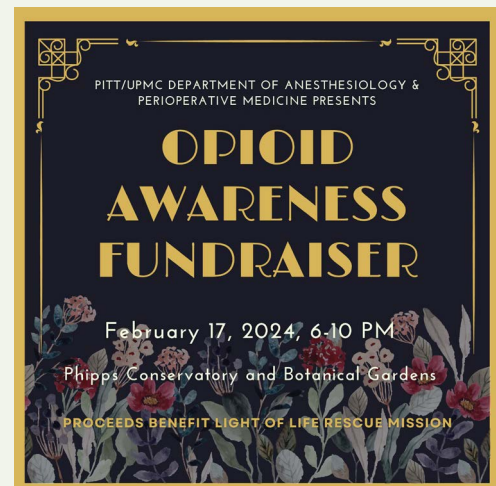
OPIOID AWARENESS FUNDRAISER

Join us for an unforgettable evening at our 4th Annual Opioid Epidemic Awareness Fundraiser on Saturday, February 17th, 2024 from 6-10pm. Escape the winter chill of Pittsburgh as we gather in the lush surroundings of the tropical forest hall at Phipps Conservatory.

The event will raise funds for the Light of Life Rescue Mission, an organization that makes a significant impact by providing food, shelter, and hope to individuals and families facing homelessness, poverty, or addiction.

Your ticket includes admission to the event, featuring heavy appetizers, soft drinks, a cash bar, entertainment, access to exclusive silent auction items, and the chance to mingle with local celebrities. Secure your spot by purchasing a ticket on [our event website](#).

For those looking to contribute further, consider becoming an event sponsor, making a direct donation to Light of Life, providing an in-kind gift for the auction, or participating in the silent auction and raffle. To get involved in any of these initiatives, please [email Lauren Nahouraii, MD, CA-2 Resident, Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine](#), via email. Your support will help make a lasting impact on the lives of those in need.



Upcoming Events

PITTSBURGH CRNA SYMPOSIUM



Registration is now open for the Pittsburgh CRNA Symposium! This annual event is the oldest continually running CRNA conference in the tri-state area, offering high quality continuing education lectures for CRNAs, SRNAs, registered nurses, and anesthesia techs. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn the latest anesthesia practice standards and exchange ideas and approaches with fellow colleagues. The symposium will be held Saturday, February 24, 2024, 6:30 AM - 5:30 PM at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital. The course has been pre-approved by the AANA for

10 class A credits. **Clarice Hune, DNP, CRNA**, and **Laura Wiggins, DNP, CRNA**, nurse anesthetists from our department at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, are Program Coordinators for the event. Learn more and register at pghcrnasymposium.org. Space is limited, so please register at your earliest convenience.

LECTURE SERIES

We launched a new year of lecture series in the fall with some enhancements and changes. Check out the full schedule in the [Events section](#) of our website. Each lecture is announced on our social media channels. Except for our Faculty Development Lectures and departmental Journal Clubs, participation in these educational events is open to those both inside and outside our department.

Department Grand Rounds/Journal Club lectures continue to be held Thursdays at 5 PM. Journal Clubs are held both virtually via Microsoft Teams as well as in person in the LHAS Auditorium in UPMC Montefiore, 7th Floor. Visiting professor/keynote speaker Grand Rounds are held virtually only. CME credit is available. The University of Pittsburgh ISER website hosts recordings of past lectures for viewing. For more information about accessing lectures, please consult our [Grand Rounds/Journal Club User Guide](#).

OB & Women's Health Grand Rounds continue to be held monthly on Tuesdays from 6:45-7:45 AM virtually via Microsoft Teams and in person at UPMC Magee-Womens Hospital, Education Room 3415. CME credit is available. Lecture recording links are archived on our SharePoint intranet site and are shared with external participants upon request.

Research Rounds are now held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month, 3-4 PM in a hybrid format - virtually via Microsoft Teams and in person (for most lectures - locations announced prior to lectures). CME credit is available. Lecture recording links are archived on our SharePoint intranet site and are shared with external participants upon request.

Faculty Development Lectures are held the second Thursday of each month from 5-6 PM via Microsoft Teams. Department faculty members and trainees are invited to attend these seminars, which feature many professional topics to aid your growth as an academic anesthesiologist. Junior anesthesiology faculty on the academic track especially will benefit the most from the seminar series. Starting this academic year, CME credit has been made available for these lectures. Lecture recording links are archived [on our website](#).

Education News

FACULTY EARN PRESTIGIOUS TEACHING ROLES



Michael Best,
MD, FASA,
Maj, USAFR



William R. McIvor, MD,
FASA



Huong-Tram Duran, MD



Alexander D. Praslick, MD

Several of our faculty members were appointed to prestigious teaching roles in the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

Drs. Michael Best and **William McIvor** were appointed as Longitudinal Educators. Longitudinal Educators are small group facilitators who teach cohorts of nine to 10 medical students foundational science content such as histology, immunology, and biochemistry; organ system integrated content like pulmonary, rheumatology, and endocrinology; and key threads/themes like social medicine, critical reasoning, and leadership.

Dr. Best was also appointed as a Clinical Skills Preceptor. Clinical Skills Preceptors teach clinical skills longitudinally to groups of five to six medical students, focusing on interviewing, exam skills, procedures, and other patient centered care content, both at Scaife Hall and at hospital/clinic sites.

Drs. Huong-Tram Duran and **Alexander Praslick** were appointed as Student Coaches. Student Coaches support first and second year medical students who are having academic challenges, providing structure and accountability in a longitudinal, nonjudgmental, supportive relationship and assisting with goal setting, increasing efficiency, time management, and accountability.

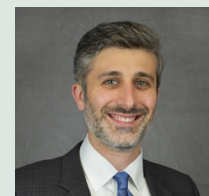
Congratulations to Drs. Best, Duran, McIvor, and Praslick for achieving these distinguished appointments!

RESIDENTS SELECTED FOR LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Drs. Monique Cheng and **Michael Massey** (currently a UPMC Adult Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology Fellow) were selected for the Pitt-UPMC Senior Resident and Fellow Leadership Academy 2023 cohort. The academy is a year-long comprehensive approach to physician leadership development with multiple interventions to address the development needs of physician leaders.



Monique Cheng, MD



Michael Massey, MD

Education News

2023-2024 CHIEF RESIDENTS

On behalf of our Resident Recruitment and Selection Committee, we were proud to announce our chief residents for academic year 2024. Congratulations to Drs. Cheng, Williams, and Nanez, and thank you to the candidates, residents, and members of our department for their participation and feedback throughout the selection process.



L to R: **Monique Cheng, MD**, Chief Resident; **Maria Nanez, MD**, Associate Chief Resident; **Joe Williams, MD**, Associate Chief Resident

CHAIR'S DISTINCTION AWARDS

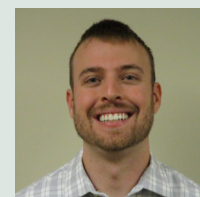
Our residents **Wesley Ramirez, MD**; **Kyle Bevers, MD**; and **Dylan Bard, MD**, received our 2023 Chair's Distinction in Anesthesiology Knowledge Awards. Both the award and the American Board of Anesthesiology (ABA) recognize and commend our CA-1 residents whose scores on the ABA BASIC Board Exam rank in the top 10% nationally among all test takers.

The ABA BASIC Exam, which anesthesiology residents take at the end of their CA-1 year, is the first test in a three-exam process to earn ABA board certification. The distinction of scoring among the top 10% of examinees is quite an honor and evidence of the diligence and hard work of our 2023 awardees. Congratulations, Drs. Bard, Bevers, and Ramirez!



THE VALUE OF OB ANESTHESIOLOGY FELLOWSHIPS

"A Survey of United States Obstetric Anesthesiologists' Perceived Value of Obstetric Anesthesiology Fellowship," in the November 2023 issue of *International Journal of Obstetric Anesthesia*, highlights the positive impact of obstetric anesthesiology (OB) fellowship training on the careers and well-being of OB anesthesiologists in the United States. The article, co-authored by our Director of OB Anesthesia Education **Tyler Smith, MD**, conveys several key findings based on responses to a survey sent to US OB anesthesiology fellowship alumni.



The data confirms the importance of these critical OB anesthesia training programs, including our renowned UPMC OB Anesthesiology Fellowship Program. We also offer several OB anesthesiology fellowship pathways that intersect with other anesthesia subspecialties. Please visit the below pages for more information on each pathway:

- **OB / Anesthesiology Critical Care Medicine Fellowship Pathway**
- **OB / Adult Cardiothoracic Anesthesiology Fellowship Pathway**
- **Regional / OB Fellowship Pathway**

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RESIDENT AND FELLOW CLASS OF 2023!

Graduation 2023



On Friday, June 9, 2023, we celebrated the graduation of our Class of 2023 residents and fellows at the Sheraton Pittsburgh Hotel at Station Square. Congratulations to our outstanding graduates!

GRADUATING RESIDENTS

post-graduation plans listed under each name



Harold Burke, MD
Associate Chief Resident
ACGME fellowship,
Case Western



Chelsea Cady, MD, MS
Private or community
practice non-teaching
position, Tampa, FL



Alexander Chassé, DO
Private or community
practice non-teaching
position, Medstar
Washington Hospital
Center - District of
Columbia



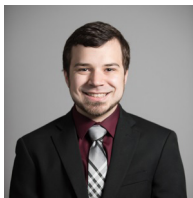
Erin Cisney, MD
ACGME fellowship,
Cohen Children's Long
Island, New York



Kylie Grady, MD
Obstetric
Anesthesiology
Fellow, UPMC



Nehah Harinarayan, MD, MS
Private or community practice
non-teaching position,
US Anesthesia Partners,
Denver, CO



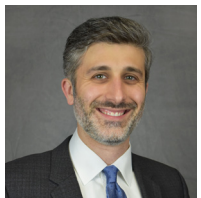
Matthew Kocher, MD
Pediatric
Anesthesiology
Fellow, UPMC



Christopher Lacomis, MD
Adult Cardiothoracic
Anesthesiology Fellow,
UPMC



Jacob Ludin, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
Anesthesiology &
Perioperative Medicine



Michael Massey, MD
Chief Resident
Adult Cardiothoracic
Anesthesiology Fellow,
UPMC



Michael Morgan, MD
Associate Chief Resident
Private or community
practice non-teaching
position, Geisinger
Community Medical Center



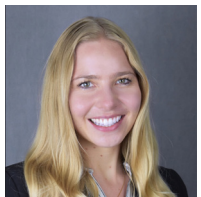
Tho Nguyen, MD
Private or community
practice non-teaching
position, Dallas, TX



**Mackenzie Noonan
Haase, MD**
ACGME fellowship,
pediatric anesthesiology



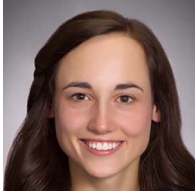
Daniella Ohnemus, MD
Private or community
practice non-teaching
position, Denver, CO



Miriam Oren, MD
Private or community
practice non-
teaching position, US
Anesthesia Partners,
Las Vegas, NV

GRADUATING RESIDENTS

post-graduation plans listed under each name



Stephanie Parry, MD
*Combined Anesthesiology
 Pediatrics Resident*
 Pediatric Anesthesiology
 Fellow, UPMC



Thomas Pham, MD
 Faculty,
 Pitt/UPMC
 Anesthesiology
 & Perioperative
 Medicine



Paige Pribonic, MD
 Pain Medicine
 Fellow, UPMC



Brian Reon, MD, PhD
PANTHER Track Resident
 Academic faculty,
 University of Virginia



**Connor
 Richardson, MD**
 ACGME fellowship,
 Chicago, IL



Bryna Torre, MD
 Private or
 community practice
 non-teaching
 position, Mount
 Nittany Medical
 Center

GRADUATING FELLOWS

post-graduation plans listed under each name

ADULT CARDIOTHORACIC ANESTHESIOLOGY



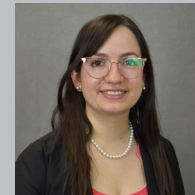
Melissa Burtoft, MD, MS
 Ohio Health



Alessandra Cardi, MD
 University of
 Pennsylvania Health
 System



Zach Frabitore, MD
 North Georgia Health
 System

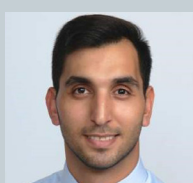


Melissa Giraldo Duque, MD
 Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
 Anesthesiology &
 Perioperative Medicine

ANESTHESIOLOGY CRITICAL CARE MEDICINE



**Samuel
 Atherton, MD**



**TurkyAlsubahi,
 MBBS, MD**

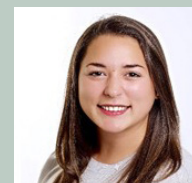


**Emuejevoke
 Chuba, MBBS**
 UPMC Adult
 Cardiothoracic
 Anesthesiology Fellow



Ryan Nicklas, MD

OB ANESTHESIOLOGY

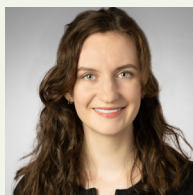


Catherine Bergeron, MD
 Faculty, University of
 Montreal, Canada

PEDIATRIC ANESTHESIOLOGY



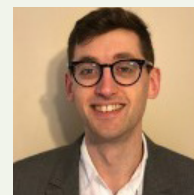
Jessica Boateng, DO
 Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
 Anesthesiology &
 Perioperative Medicine



Elizabeth Pickle, MD
 UPMC Pain Medicine
 Fellow



Holly Turula, MD
 Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
 Anesthesiology &
 Perioperative Medicine



Ryan R. Kotecki, DO
 Faculty, Pitt/UPMC
 Anesthesiology &
 Perioperative Medicine

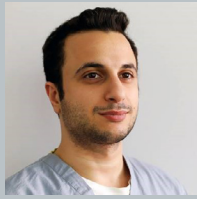


Shanté L. White, MD
 Faculty, University of
 Rochester Medical
 Center - Strong
 Memorial Hospital

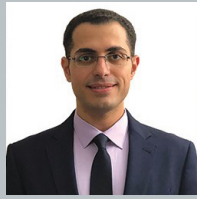
GRADUATING FELLOWS

post-graduation plans listed under each name

PAIN MEDICINE



Leath Abdullah, MD
VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System



Geroges Azer, MD
Ochsner Clinic Foundation



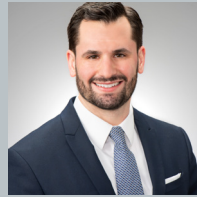
Alexander Behnaz, MD
Private or community practice, Maryland



Peter Boateng, DO
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine



Michael L. Desciak, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine



Ryan S. Holden, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine



Abigail Hellman, PhD
Postdoc.Associate, Mahajan Lab



Callie Hlavin, MD, MPH
PGY-4 Surgery Resident, UPMC



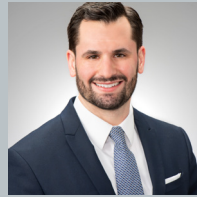
Mutasim A. Makeen, MBBS
Clinical Research Asst. Pitt Dept. Medicine



Edward H. Kim, MD
Everett Clinic Pain/Spine Medicine



Malcolm K. Moses-Hampton, MD
Clearway Pain Solutions



Michael T. Murphy, MD
Kansas City Orthopedic Alliance



Daniel DaTorre, MD
Private practice



Andrew Goodman, MD
Private practice, Virginia Hospital Center



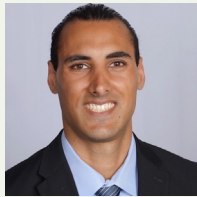
Francesca Aromin, MD
Academic Position, WVU Ruby Memorial Hospital



Basma Khalil, MD
Private practice



Jacky Leong, DO
Private practice



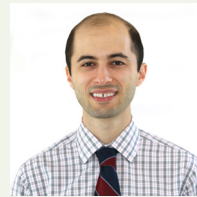
Alistar Meshkin, MD
Private practice, Orange Coast Anesthesia, Inc., California



Wolfgang Nnchiifor, MD
Private practice, St. Vincent Hospital-Erie, PA



Alexandra Rooney, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine



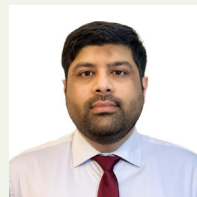
Eric Silverman, MD
Private practice, Bellingham Anesthesia Associates, Bellingham Washington



Timothy Swiatkowski, MD
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine



Pankaj Thakur, MBBS
Private practice



Syed Waqar, MBBS
Integrated Anesthesia Associates, Hartford Healthcare, Hartford, CT



Matt Yin, MD, MBA
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine



Adam Zurney, DO
Faculty, Pitt/UPMC Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine

REGIONAL ANESTHESIOLOGY

2023-2024

CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME TO ALL OUR NEW RESIDENTS AND CLINICAL FELLOWS WHO BEGAN THEIR TRAINING IN SUMMER 2023!

New Residents & Fellows

RESIDENTS

NEW PGY-1 RESIDENTS



Abiye Agbeh, MD
(Combined
Anesthesiology/
Pediatric Resident)
Medical College of
Wisconsin



Sylvie Bertrand, MD
Geisel School
of Medicine at
Dartmouth



David Brinton, MD
Pennsylvania State
University



Denali Davis, MD
Pennsylvania State
University



Joshua DeWalt, MD
University of Pittsburgh



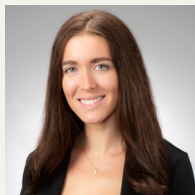
John Driggers, MD
University of Central
Florida



Maria Evankovich, MD
University of
Pittsburgh



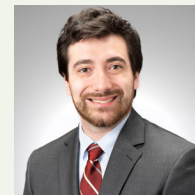
Sarah Fribance, MD
University of Virginia



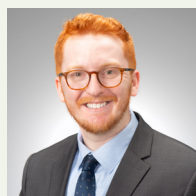
**Andrea Gomez
Sanchez, MD**
Universitat de
Barcelona



Brianna Hildreth, MD
University of
Pittsburgh



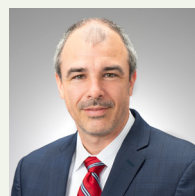
**Darius
Hossainian, MD**
University of Pittsburgh



Steven Lebowitz, MD
University of
Pittsburgh



**Alejandro Munoz-
Valencia, MD, PhD**
(PANTHER Research
Resident)
Universidad Nacional
de Colombia



**Marc Peretti,
MD, BSE**
University of
Pittsburgh



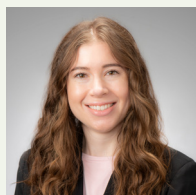
**Charlotte
Rayburn, MD**
University of Alabama
at Birmingham



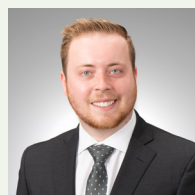
James Rooney, MD
(PITTrack Program)
University of
Pittsburgh



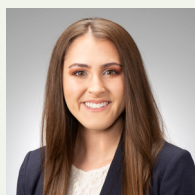
Austin Smith, MD
University of
Pittsburgh



**Brooke
Stephens, MD**
Ohio State University



Tyler Weigel, MD
University of
Pittsburgh



Morgan Zopp, MD
West Virginia
University



Neha Patel, MD
Northwestern
University



Quan Pham, MD
Wake Forest Baptist
Medical Center

New PGY-2 Residents

FELLOWS

ADULT CARDIOTHORACIC ANESTHESIOLOGY



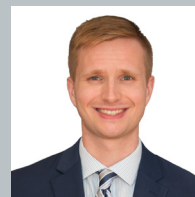
Emuejevoke Chuba, MBBS
Residency: Temple University Hospital



Michael Massey, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology, UPMC



Megan (Rosie) McClain, MD
Residency: University of Maryland Medical Center

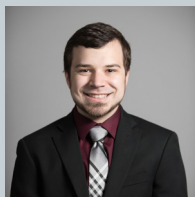


Christopher Lacomis, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology, UPMC

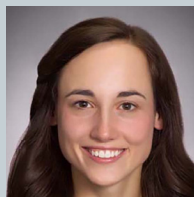
PEDIATRIC ANESTHESIOLOGY



Gargi Banerjee, MBBS
Residency: Anesthesiology, Henry Ford Hospital



Matthew Kocher, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology, UPMC



Stephanie Parry, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology, UPMC



Kelli Watson, MD, MPH
Residency: Anesthesiology, Mayo Clinic

PAIN MEDICINE



Adam Amir, DO
Residency: Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, The Johns Hopkins University Hospital



Michael Guju, MD
Residency: Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Eastern Virginia Medical School



Isaiah Levy, MD
Residency: Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, UPMC



Merna Najji, MD
Residency: Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, UPMC

OB ANESTHESIOLOGY



Kumiko Chino, MD
Residency: University of Utah



Kylie Grady, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology, UPMC



Rebecca E. Kotcher, MD
Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania



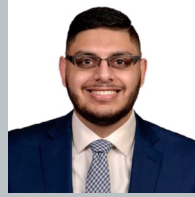
Marcus Simmons, MD
Meharry Medical College School of Medicine

T32 RESEARCH FELLOWS

REGIONAL ANESTHESIOLOGY



Enoch Cheung, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology
University of Maryland
Medical Center



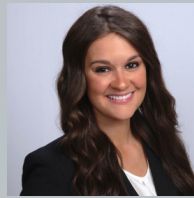
George Gadalla, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology,
St. Joseph's University
Medical Center



Adrienne Gomez, MBBS
Residency: Anesthesiology,
Case Western Reserve
University-MetroHealth
Hospital



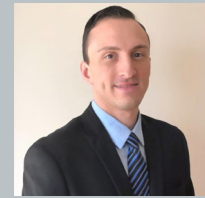
Antony Irungu, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology,
Rutgers-New Jersey Medical
School



Catherine Jansen, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology,
University of Kentucky



Yunhee Kim, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology,
St. Elizabeth's Medical
Center



Julio Medina, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology,
Augusta University Medical
Center



Jae (Brian) Park, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology,
Montefiore Medical Center/
Albert Einstein College of
Medicine



Brianna Rea, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology,
McGraw Medical Center of
Northwestern University



Matthew Sarubbi, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology,
Rutgers-Robert Wood
Johnson University Hospital



Yunze Wen, MD
Residency: Anesthesiology,
St. Elizabeth's Medical
Center

2024-2025 MATCH RESULTS

Match results are in for several of our fellowship programs for the 2024-2025 academic year! Please visit our website (links below) to view:

Obstetric Anesthesiology

Pediatric Anesthesiology

Pain Medicine

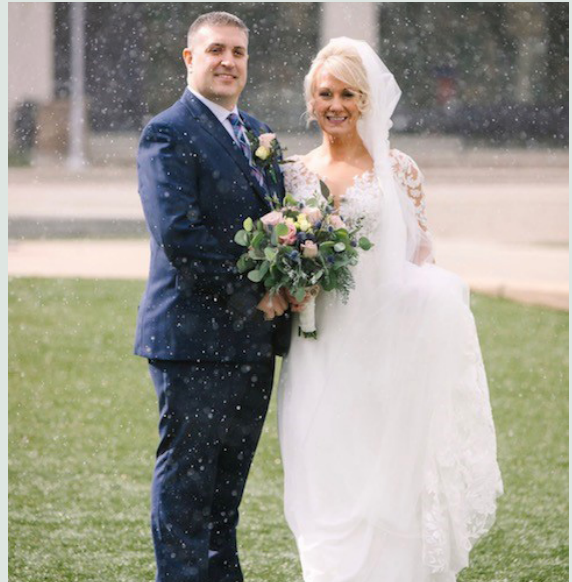
Regional Anesthesiology

Celebrating Milestones

From weddings that marked the union of hearts, the arrival of precious little ones, the triumphant graduations, to the warmth of family and department celebrations, these photos celebrate the many milestones achieved and cherished by our team. Thank you to all who graciously shared these glimpses into moments that make our department truly special.



Drs. Jessica Boateng (UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh) and Peter Boateng (Pain Management) welcomed new baby Pierson Shawn Kofi Boateng on November 10, 2023



Chad Johnston and Shannon Morrissey Johnston (Assistant Administrator, CIPC, Pain Management, and CPC) were wed on March 18, 2023



Dana Gemma (CRNA, UPMC Children's) and Dr. Michael Gemma (UPMC Presbyterian) celebrated the birth of their son, Leo Michael Gemma on June 17, 2023



Francesca Yanosick (Education Office) graduated with a Master's degree in Health Administration



Dr. John Williams (VA Pittsburgh) and his wife Valerie Trott Williams welcomed new twin grandbabies, a boy and a girl, born July 27, 2023.



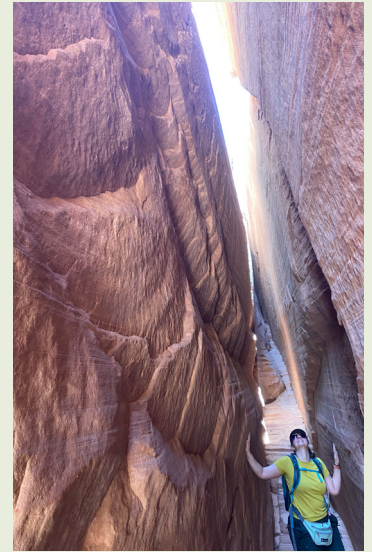
Jen Fleegle-Vistas (UPMC Presbyterian) and her family had a summer celebration at their house. Pictured with Jen is her husband, Chris, and their two daughters, Kaylee and Kenzie.



Its been a busy year for Jen Branik (Scaife Administration) and her family! Jen and her husband Gary's son, Zach, graduated from CCAC with a degree in Fire & Emergency Services in May 2023, followed by their daughter, Abby, graduating from Keystone Oaks High School in June and starting at the University of Pittsburgh-Greensburg in the fall to pursue a degree in nursing.



Tyler Schultz (CRNA UPMC Passavant) and his wife Nicole welcomed their son, Milo, on June 16, 2023. Here they are enjoying a Pirates vs. Guardians ballgame over the summer



Britni Kress (Scaife Administration) and her husband Dayne had some exciting adventures over the summer.
 Left: Britni inside the Delicate Arch at Arches National Park.
 Center: Britni and Dayne hiking the Keyanti Trail at Zion National Park.
 Right: Britni inside a split canyon in Orderville, Utah.



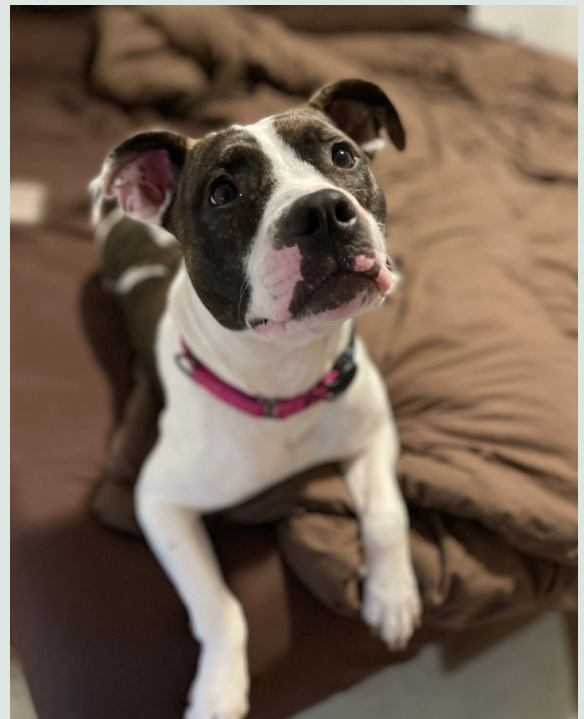
Dr. Doreen Soliman (UPMC Children's) captured these photos of various resident/fellow social events - wedding celebrations, end of rotation gatherings, graduation, and our fall welcome picnic.



On September 21, 2023, Katie Meister and Shannon Morrissey hosted a party to celebrate the upcoming nuptials of Miranda Masters (Scaife Administration)



UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Anesthesiology celebrated Dr. Lu'ay Nubani, who became a U.S. citizen on June 8, 2023.



Meredith Axe (Division Administrator) welcomed her 17th foster puppy this year! Artie (pictured here) is still looking for his forever home. Find more information about Artie and many other wonderful furry family members [here](#).



The OR nurses at UPMC Mercy honored the retirement of Leslie O'Connor, CRNA, with a celebration brunch. Leslie retired in August 2023 after working at UPMC for over 46 years.

Career Opportunities

FACULTY

We are seeking highly motivated physicians and physician researchers with demonstrated track records for excellence and the ability to work with a highly productive team. We offer positions in numerous anesthesiology subspecialties throughout over 20 clinical sites. Our anesthesiologists enjoy exceptional career growth opportunities, stability, and flexible scheduling as part of a financially strong and thriving world-class health system. Our highly competitive compensation and benefits package includes occurrence-based malpractice, an employer-funded retirement plan, health insurance, CME allowance, and more. We are currently recruiting for various faculty positions, including clinical leadership and subspecialty focused roles.

Please visit "[career opportunities](#)" on our website for more information and to view current vacancies.

Interested candidates should send their CV to gallascj@upmc.edu.

T32 POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS

We are actively recruiting physicians who are committed to excellence in both clinical care and research for an NIH-funded research training program. Most trainees are recruited from anesthesiology residency programs, but individuals from other clinical specialties may be considered if their research interest is focused on problems in anesthesiology and pain medicine. Trainees are expected to spend at least two years in the program and devote a minimum of 80% effort toward their research.

More information on the program and eligibility requirements can be found [on our website](#). Applications will be accepted until positions are filled. For more information on the NIH T32 Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, please email Yan Xu, PhD, Program Director.

CRNAs



We are seeking full-time, part-time, and casual CRNAs at various UPMC facilities/hospitals. Our CRNAs enjoy:

- Market-competitive salaries with newly increased salary ranges and new sign-on bonuses
- A robust CRNA career ladder to support career advancement with compensation increases to recognize expertise and contributions along the way
- Generous paid time off, including PTO advance for experienced CRNAs to support work-life balance
- Site movement incentives to recognize and reward flexibility
- Annual pay increases based on performance to acknowledge professional contributions as a CRNA
- Comprehensive benefits package and retirement options

Visit the [UPMC Careers website](#) to review open CRNA positions. To connect directly with a member of our recruitment team, please contact Rise' Porter-Wolf at wolfr@upmc.edu or 412-864-2034. For questions regarding CRNA positions, please e-mail Toni Orsino, MBA, CRNA at orsinoa@upmc.edu.

UPMC positions: EOE. Minority/Female/Vet/Disabled

The University of Pittsburgh is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and values equality of opportunity, human dignity and diversity, EOE, including disability/vets.

Giving

Please help us continue our tradition of excellence by supporting our department with your tax-deductible gift. Whether you choose to contribute toward our research initiatives, educational programs, or other area of need, your generosity is sincerely appreciated at any level. Philanthropic giving to our department plays an important role in helping us improve the lives of patients throughout Western Pennsylvania and all over the world by giving us more opportunities to train the best and brightest clinicians and discover new and better treatment plans.

HOW TO GIVE

To make your gift by check: Checks should be made payable to University of Pittsburgh Physicians. If you wish to give to a specific department initiative or would like your gift to honor or memorialize an individual, please designate this information on the memo line. Please mail checks to Barb Novak Chismar, Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, 3471 Fifth Avenue, Suite 402 Kaufmann Building, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

To make your gift by credit card: Please contact [Cathy Majka](#) at 412-251-6257.

Other Ways to Give: For more information on how to contribute to the University of Pittsburgh Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, please contact Cathy Majka at Pitt's Division of Philanthropic and Alumni Engagement at 412-251-6257. Other types of gifts accepted include:

- Honorary or memorial gifts in honor or memory of an individual is a thoughtful way to recognize the accomplishments of or remember a loved one, friend, or colleague
- Gifts of stock
- Gifts of other assets
- Unrestricted gifts
- Bequests and planned gifts

Matching Gifts

Your gift may be increased if you work for a company with a matching gift program. Spouse and retiree gifts may also be matched. Contact your company's human resources department to get more information on the options they offer.

Tax Concerns

Your contribution may be tax-deductible. Contributions to the University of Pittsburgh and UPMC are tax-deductible as provided by law. Official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free at 1-800-732-0999. Please consult with your tax advisor before making any contribution or taking any tax deduction.



We gratefully acknowledge the generous donations from contributors to the Alumni Fund on our website



In Memoriam

With profound sorrow, we announce the passing of three remarkable individuals who have been an integral part of our department at the University of Pittsburgh and UPMC. Their legacies will forever be etched in our hearts. We extend our deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathies to their families, friends, and all those who had the privilege of working alongside these esteemed clinicians. In the memories we hold, these remarkable team members will forever remain a source of inspiration and gratitude.

Michael D. Minton, MD (June 3, 2023)

Dr. Michael Minton, a dedicated member of our department from 1985 until his retirement in 2021, left an indelible mark on UPMC Mercy and UPMC St. Margaret. He was known for this remarkable intellect and delightful sense of humor.

After earning his BS in chemistry from Allegheny College, Dr. Minton completed his MD at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine in 1981. Following his anesthesiology residency at Mercy Hospital in Pittsburgh, he pursued a neuroanesthesiology fellowship at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville and a cardiovascular anesthesiology fellowship at the Texas Heart Institute in Houston. In 1985, he joined the clinical staff at Mercy, where he served as Chief of the Division of Neuroanesthesia and Neural Sciences for a decade, as well as at St. Margaret, where he served as Chief Anesthesiologist from 1988 through 1998. Throughout his career, Dr. Minton also worked at St. Francis Medical Center, St. Clair Hospital, and Jefferson Regional Medical Center.



Beyond his professional accomplishments, those who worked closely with Dr. Minton remember him for his kindness and his deep love for his family. He leaves behind a cherished legacy in the field of anesthesiology and in the hearts of his two children and three grandchildren.

- **Obituary: Michael D. Minton, MD**

Carol E. Rose, MD (October 16, 2023)

Dr. Carol Rose, a dynamic force in our department for 19 years, played a pivotal role as the director of electroconvulsive therapy anesthesiology at UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital.

She embarked on her medical journey in 1978 at the University of Miami, defying norms and expectations as one of the few women among her peers. She completed her residency at Mercy Hospital in Pittsburgh.

Dr. Rose's contributions extended well beyond her clinical work. She actively engaged with local and national medical organizations, championing the Allegheny County Medical Society and advocating for Allegheny County to have its own district in the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED). Her leadership journey culminated in her becoming PAMED's first female President in 2000. She also presided over the Pennsylvania Society of Anesthesiologists and served as a delegate to the American Medical Association and the American Society of Anesthesiologists. In 2010, she was elected as Chair of the Pennsylvania State Board of Medicine, retiring from clinical practice to focus on this pivotal role.



Dr. Rose's remarkable legacy will continue to inspire and guide our department. She will be fondly remembered by our longstanding team members for her unwavering dedication and leadership.

- **Obituary: Carol Elaine Rose, MD**

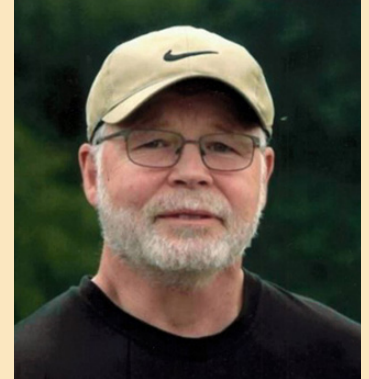
In Memoriam

Les Watson, MSN, CRNA (April 14, 2023)

Gilbert "Les" Watson, a beloved member of our team, left us suddenly on April 14, 2023. He had been a dedicated nurse anesthetist at UPMC Presbyterian since 2009. Les earned both his Bachelor and Master of Science in Nursing degrees at the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing. His career at UPMC Presbyterian started as a Level II CRNA, and he quickly earned a place as a member of the trauma/transplant team. His incredible work ethic and unwavering commitment were known to all.

Les was a member of the Pennsylvania Association of Nurse Anesthetists and the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists, contributing significantly to the field. His legacy as a compassionate and skilled healthcare professional will continue to inspire our department.

- [Obituary: Gilbert "Les" Watson](#)



CRNAs Help UPMC Presbyterian Team Mourn Loss

In the wake of Les Watson's sudden passing, **Molly S. Galbraith, MSN, CRNA**, and **Julie D. Ging, MSN, CRNA**, of UPMC Presbyterian provided extraordinary support and comfort to Les's family and the UPMC Presbyterian Anesthesiology Department. They organized a "grief intervention," serving as liaisons between Les's family and the department. Their efforts included assisting Les's family, setting up memorial photos, sending department-wide notifications, and arranging a visit for Les's family and grandchildren to see and learn about his workplace.

Their compassion and dedication during this difficult time were truly exceptional. In recognition of their extraordinary actions, Molly and Julie received the UPMC Physician Services' "Extra Mile" Quarter 2 Award. Their efforts helped both Les's family and the department in the healing process.

We express our deep gratitude to Molly and Julie for honoring the memory of our cherished CRNA, Les Watson, and for their compassionate support during this challenging time. Their kindness and dedication are a testament to the strength and unity of our department.





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Department of Anesthesiology
and Perioperative Medicine

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Pitt Anesthesiology & Perioperative Medicine



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